Aug. 1, 1988

THE NEW YORKER

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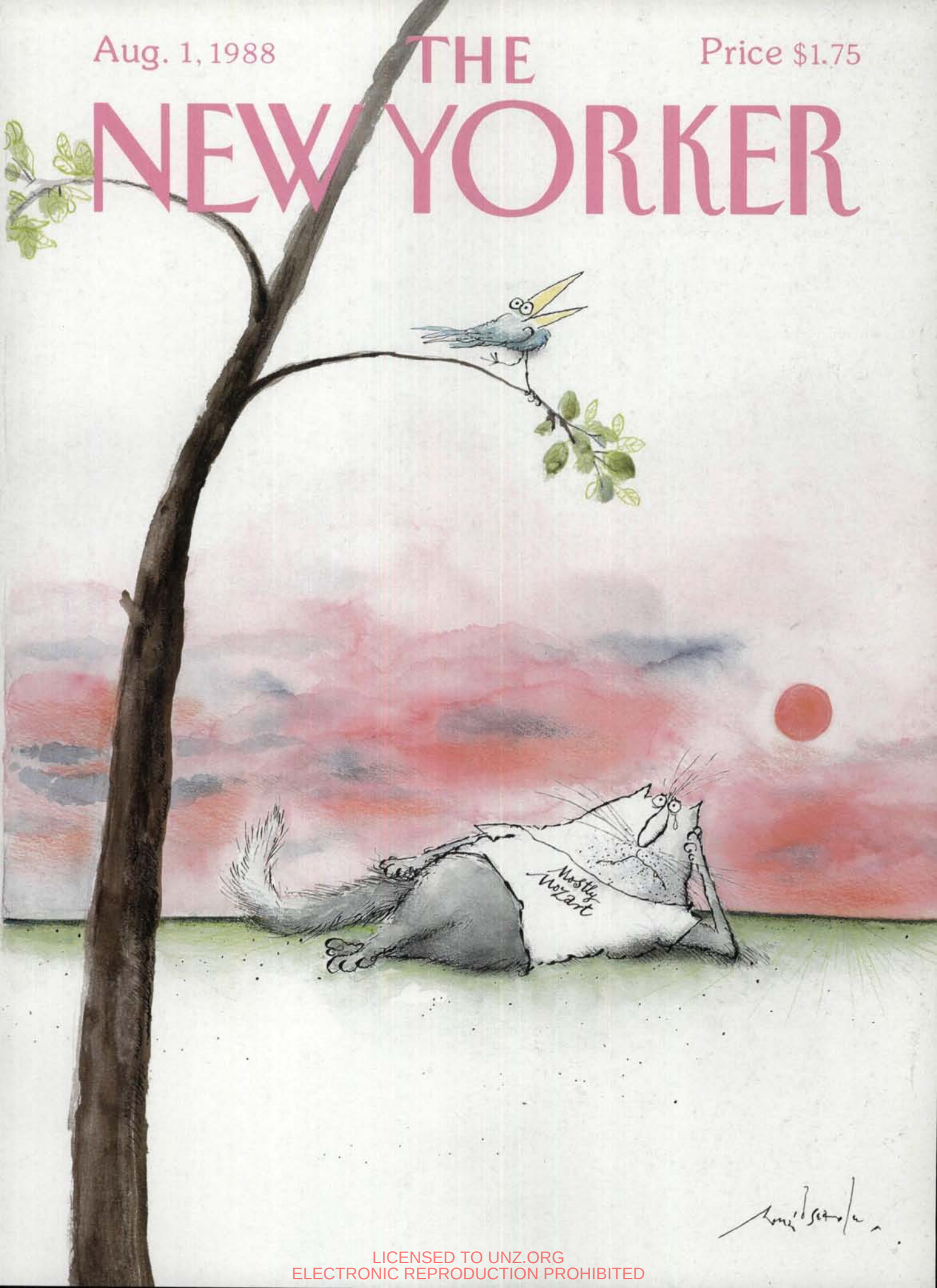

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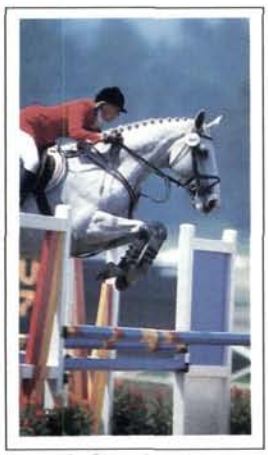

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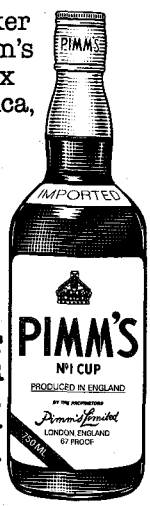

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THE NEW YORKER

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATRE—Final performances of two plays in repertory. **SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR:** Robert Brustein's adaptation of the Pirandello classic. (Monday and Tuesday, July 25-26, at 8.) . . . **BIG TIME: SCENES FROM A SERVICE ECONOMY:** Keith Reddin's one-act satire about a smartly dressed international banker who is morally an empty suit. Directed by Steven Schachter. (Wednesday and Thursday, July 27-28, at 8, and Friday and Saturday, July 29-30, at 5 and 9.) (Joyce, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

THE FILM SOCIETY—A play by Jon Robin Baitz, with Dillon Evans, William Glover, and Margaret Hilton. Directed by John Tillinger. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

GODSPELL—A revival of the 1971 musical by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesday through Saturday, July 26-30, at 8. Matinées Wednesday, July 27, and Saturday, July 30, at 2, and Sunday, July 31, at 3.)

JIKA—A play about the South African student movement, written and directed by Maishe Maponya. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursday through Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, July 31.)

M. BUTTERFLY—David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play is based on an actual case: in 1964, a French diplomat took as his mistress a star of the Beijing Opera, and some twenty years later—when they were both charged with being spies—discovered that "she" was a he. John Lithgow, in the leading role, gives an exceptional performance, and so does B. D. Wong as his lover. Lori Tan Chinn, George N. Martin, and Rose Gregorio give them sound support. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/4/88.) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

MIRACOLO D'AMORE—This theatre piece, conceived and directed by the extraordinary Martha Clarke, was inspired by, among other things, the Punchinello drawings of Tiepolo, the eighteenth-century Venetian artist. The score was composed by Richard Peaslee, the setting and costumes were designed by Robert Israel, and the lighting was by Paul Gallo. The show is a treat for the eye and ear and, occasionally, the funny bone for the mere sixty minutes it runs. (7/11/88) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8, and Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 7:30 and 9:30. Closes Saturday, Aug. 13.)

MOROCCO—Sam Freed, George Guidall, and Gordana Rashovich in a play by Allan Havis. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 9. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3.)

THE NIGHT OF THE IGUANA—Except for the performances of Jane Alexander and Maria Tucci, this revival of Tennessee Williams' play is disappointing. (7/11/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performance of Michael Crawford in the title role. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

ROAD—Betsy Aidem, Kevin Bacon, and Joan Cusack in a play by Jim Cartwright. Previews Tuesday and Wednesday, July 26-27. Opens officially on Thursday, July 28. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Tues-

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days through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

THE ROAD TO MECCA—An absorbing, if somewhat elusive, play by the South African dramatist Athol Fugard, about an aging woman sculptor who is mystical and independent, and who resists the attempts of a local minister to persuade her to go into an old-people's home. With Yvonne Bryceland, Mr. Fugard himself, and Kathy Bates, as a young disciple of the sculptor. Mr. Fugard directed. (4/25/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

ROMANCE/ROMANCE—A pair of charming one-act musicals that have travelled successfully from Off to Broadway. Scott Bakula and Alison Fraser are as romantic as required in the leading roles. Barry Harman wrote the clever books and lyrics, and Keith Herrmann wrote the engaging scores. Mr. Harman directed. (5/16/88) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

SPEED-THE-PLOW—David Mamet's satire on Hollywood is just as scathing, just as acute as his "Glengarry Glen Ross," and even funnier, if that can be imagined. Under the direction of Gregory Mosher, Joe Mantegna and Ron Silver give stunning performances as a pair of sleazy producers, and Madonna does well, too, as a wide-eyed secretary. (5/16/88) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6277. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

TAMARA—A participatory theatrical encounter, in which the audience must literally follow the characters as they move from room to room in what is supposed to be Gabriele D'Annunzio's villa. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 239-2590. Mondays through Wednesdays, and Fridays, at 8; Saturdays at 5 and 9; and Sundays at 7. The matinée schedule varies; please call ahead.)

LONG RUNS—ANYTHING GOES: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **BROADWAY BOUND:** In the third of his trilogy of autobiographical plays, Neil Simon takes us from Brooklyn to Manhattan, from ignominy to the promise of fame. Joan Rivers plays the mother; Gene Saks was the director. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **BURN THIS:** A play by Lanford Wilson, with Eric Roberts as a foulmouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery and costumes by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** This longest of long runs recently had its twenty-eighth birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE:** Carol Kane and Bruce Weitz in Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **INTO THE WOODS:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. With Dick Cavett as the Narrator. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** A fifty-year-old British musical starring Jim Dale. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Tim Shew and Norman Large star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OIL CITY SYMPHONY:** Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny musical. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **A SHAYNA MAIDEL:** A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hitler era. The

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE–Cont'd

production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson. Bring lots of Kleenex to this one, but expect to leave uplifted. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STARLIGHT EXPRESS:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

"SERIOUS FUN!"—The second annual summer series. Tuesday and Wednesday, July 26-27: Four aerially inclined dance companies—Pat Graney and her troupe, Robert Davidson and Susan Murphy, Sara Pearson, and Bridgman/Packer/Feldman. . . . ¶ Thursday, July 28: Guitarist Rhys Chatham and dancer Victoria Marks and her company. . . . ¶ Friday, July 29: Puerto Rican cuatro player Yomo Toro and Ghanaian guitarist Ko Nimo. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 30: Laurie Anderson. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Aug. 2: A program of the spoken word, with Allen Ginsberg (accompanied by Philip Glass on piano), Paul Krassner, Karen Finley, and Frank Maya. . . . ¶ Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 3-4: Nine dancer-choreographers in their own works—Keith Young, Sarah Skaggs, Charles Moulton, Mark Dendy, Elizabeth Streb, David Parsons and Daniel Ezralow, Ohad Naharin, and Molissa Fenley. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Evenings at 8.)

WITHOUT YOU I'M NOTHING—Sandra Bernhard in a one-woman show. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 5:30 and 9.)

JACKIE MASON'S "THE WORLD ACCORDING TO ME!"—The comedian's one-man show. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

CANCIONES DE MI PADRE—Linda Ronstadt and a company of twenty-one in a revue of mariachi songs and dances. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinée Saturday at 2. Closes Saturday, July 30.)

LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN—Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's **PIRATES OF PENZANCE.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

TEN PERCENT REVUE—A musical revue by Tom Wilson Weinberg about gay life. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 4.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically appointed bar and restaurant. Any swaying you may notice yourself doing is probably generated by the musicians, who perform amidships on a railed-in platform. Pianist **JIM MC NEELY** leads a trio Friday and Saturday, July 29-30. First set at ten.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A bemirrored jazz club with a piece of neon art on the back wall (the Manhattan skyline and attendant celestial bodies) and with clusters of musicians on the dais. The

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strain of jazz known as fusion—bombast is a key component—is the main fare here for the next month or so. The Yellowjackets are its purveyors Tuesday through Sunday, July 26-31; George Howard begins a week-long run on Tuesday, Aug. 2. Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Bruce Springsteen played here in 1975 and, eyewitnesses say, just about blew the house down; Tony Bennett sang here in 1981; and Dan Hicks, the toast of the folk-swing circuit, spent a night here in 1987. ("Howdja hear about this?" Hicks asked the audience, a small one.) In between and since, big stars and little stars, people with interesting haircuts and people with no hair have come and gone. A young husband-and-wife team called **TUCK & PATTI**—he plays guitar, she sings, and they both have a lot of hair—performs on Tuesday, July 26. Their repertoire runs from the light bop of Bob Dorough to Cyndi Lauper ballads. **TAJ MAHAL,** a big, tall guy who passed up a career in animal husbandry (he majored in it at the University of Massachusetts) to sing and play country blues and West Indian folk tunes and whatever else he came upon in his ethnomusicological digs, has the floor Friday and Saturday, July 29-30. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and pro conversationalists and that now also features Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, a person to collect an admission fee, and a person to seat you and shush you. It's an institution. Pianist **JOHN HICKS** works with a bassist through Saturday, July 30; **STEVE NELSON,** a driving, prolix vibraphonist, joins pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and bassist **CECIL MC BEE** on Sunday, July 31. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. On Mondays, **HAMIET BLUIETT,** the bearded baritone voice of the World Saxophone Quartet, directs his Telepathic Big Band. **IRENE REID,** a Georgia-born blues singer whose models include Dinah Washington, performs Tuesday through Sunday, July 26-31; saxophonist **JIMMY HEATH** brings in a quartet on Tuesday, Aug. 2. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Night Ark, a kind of ethno-techno jazz quartet that features an oud player and a synthesizerist, will be in this cellar Tuesday through Sunday, July 26-31; tenor saxophonist **JERRY BERGONZI,** a former Dave Brubeck hand, comes in with his combo on Tuesday, Aug. 2. Mondays remain in the hands of guitarist **LES PAUL.** Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Two things not known to be available in the next world—Chinese cooking and American jazz—are here, under a greenhouse roof giving on to some prime midtown airspace. **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** a young, wispy-looking California pianist who plays in the old Harlem style known as stride (steady, dignified left; fast, flickering right), is in charge Tuesday through Thursday, July 26-28. Pianist **CAROL BRITTO** works with bassist **MAJOR HOLLEY** Friday through Sunday, July 29-31, and Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 2-3; guitarist **BUCKY PIZZARELLI** makes it a threesome July 29-30. Music from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

GREENE STREET, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—A cathedral-size bar and restaurant. Pianists practice their art in a little grove of palms a half mile or so from the bar. Bring your binoculars. Tuesday through Saturday, July 26-30, the piano will be in the hands of **HAL SCHAEFER.** Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Mondays.

J'S, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—A room with a view (of Broadway) and with jazz (mostly of the mainstream type). **DICK HYMAN,** who has Jelly Roll Morton and James P. Johnson and a library of pop songs at his fingertips, performs on Monday, July 25. The rest of the lineup: Tuesdays, July 26 and Aug. 2, pianist-singer **RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT;** Wednesday, July 27, pianist **MIKE RENZI'S** trio; Thursday, July 28, singer-guitarist **JOHN PIZZARELLI'S** trio; Friday, July 29, the **KEN PEPLOWSKI** band; and Saturday, July 30, the Randa McNamara band. Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

JAN WALLMAN'S, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A room fit for a singer, an accompanist or two, and a party of forty-eight. The thrushes: Monday, July 25, Sandra King; Tuesday, July 26, Charlotte Crossley; Wednesday, July 27, Kathryn King Segal; Thursday, July 28, Yvonne Constant; Friday, July 29, Maia Nero; and Saturday, July 30, **BARBARA LEA.** Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant low-key bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **STEVE KUHN,** a pianist whose pearly, musing style reminds some listeners of Bill Evans, works with bassist **DAVID FINCK** Tuesday through Saturday, July 26-30; **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD** and **STEVE LA SPINA** swing into action on Tuesday, Aug. 2. **HARRY CONNICK, JR.,** the latest good news to come up the river from New Orleans, sings and plays the piano Sundays and Mondays. Music from about nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performing space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. **BERN NIX,** a guitarist in Ornette Coleman's fusion band, Prime Time, leads a trio on Wednesday, July 27; the **ORDINAIRES,** a Lower East Side jazz-rock-folk-kitchen-sink ensemble, perform on Saturday, July 30; the Soldier String Quartet, led by an electric violinist named David Soldier, holds forth on Sunday, July 31; and **JOSEPH JARMAN,** a member of the free-spirited Art Ensemble of Chicago, brings in a group on Wednesday, Aug. 3. Music after nine.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Scary-movie buffs like the epic-size iguana on the roof, Texans like the reminders of home, and musicians like the Texans, the New Yorkers, and the other visitors from this planet who regularly fill the joint up. **NEW GRASS REVIVAL,** a souped-up rock-generation bluegrass band featuring New York banjo whiz **BELA FLECK,** holds forth on Thursday, July 28; **ROBERT GORDON** performs on Friday, July 29; and a blues band run by saxophonist **EDDIE**

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SHAW, a Howlin' Wolf alumnus, plays on Saturday, July 30, along with Texas R. & B. singer ANGELA STREHLI. Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Not far from this pub's gabbing, well-heeled crowd, two groups that specialize in jazz from the archives play. The first is VINCE GIORDANO'S NIGHTHAWKS, a ten-piece outfit known for its re-creations of music performed by the orchestras of Paul Whiteman, Jean Goldkette, Fletcher Henderson, and others. The second band, led by a young Django Reinhardt admirer named FRANK VIGNOLA, models itself after the Quintette du Hot Club de France. The two bands play together as well as separately. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland) in the theatre district, and not a bad place to calm down in if, for instance, you happen to have just dropped a week's wages by taking the missus and your aunt from Macon to see a Broadway musical. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll of the Present Moment—and, occasionally, of the Classical Era (the fifties), the Romantic Era (the sixties), and the OPEC Era (the seventies)—in a big, fancy thirties-era ballroom. Three Cajun bands—ROCKIN' SIDNEY'S, ALLEN FONTENOT'S, and AL RAPONE'S—perform on Thursday, July 28; BONNIE RAITT, a pillar of the blues-rock establishment, shares the bill with NRBQ on Saturday, July 30; FATS DOMINO, who likes to ramble around his New Orleans piano with a pound or two of rings on his fingers, will be here with a thirteen-piece band for a week starting Monday, Aug. 1. An hour or so of Fats will set you back a minimum of thirty dollars (if you want to take him in sitting down). Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African pop bands, reggae people, zydeco outfits, and salsa ensembles all pass through this former luncheonette. Tuesday, July 26, Asante, a Ghanaian band; Wednesday and Thursday, July 27-28, reggae singers JUDY MOWATT and Andrew Tosh; Friday, July 29, Jewel Ackah; Saturday, July 30, LOREMIL MACHADO & SARAVA; and Wednesday, Aug. 3, the MEDITATIONS, a reggae harmony group. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SPEAKEASY, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—The site, many moons ago, of Rienzi's, a coffeehouse on the beaten path; nowadays, it's home to folkies, blues people, bluegrass fiddlers, lonesome cowboys, and a stray rock person or two. TONY BIRD, a South African folksinger, has the floor on Thursday, July 28; TOWNES VAN ZANDT, a Texas-born singer-songwriter whose homely, mournful voice is just about right for delivering his country laments, performs on Saturday, July 30. Music from about eight-thirty. Dining.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A knotty-pine-and-brick-walled *bofte*, crowded with jazz fans from Japan, France, Germany, Denmark, Greenwich Village, and other countries. OLIVER JONES, a pianist who shares a home town (Montreal) and a style (whizzing, Tatumesque) with Oscar Peterson, leads a trio Tuesday through Sunday, July 26-31; they'll be joined by other Canadian musicians (including guitarist ED BICKERT on July 26-27) each night. PHIL WOODS, a hard-blowing alto saxophonist and sometime clarinettist, brings in his quintet on Tuesday, Aug. 2. Mondays are reserved for singer DAKOTA STATON. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple, no-frills blues and rock club attached to an Irish pub. JOHNNY COPELAND, a Texas-bred bluesman whose performances don't lack for heat or fervor, brings his band here Friday and Saturday, July 29-30. Music after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—A bi-level operation. In the downstairs room, which is as big and unbeautiful as a mess hall, it's GATO BARBIERI, the Argentine tenor saxophonist who was once of the Pharoah Sanders high-energy camp and now turns out fairly subdued Latin funk. His band performs Friday and Saturday, July 29-30, at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Mondays belong to salsa bands. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, JIMMY GOURLEY, a bop-era guitarist who has spent most of his career in Paris, works with bassist Dominique Lemerle Tuesday through Sunday, July 26-31. On Tuesday, they trade sets with jazz harpist DAPHNE HELLMAN'S trio. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, this establishment has been described by Max Gordon, the wise, elfin, cigar-smoking proprietor, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." Pianist LARRY WILLIS leads a quintet Tuesday through Sunday, July 26-31. BIRELI LAGRENE, the formidable Gypsy guitarist whose "early work" (he made his first record in 1980, when he was thirteen) reflected Django Reinhardt and whose latest recording suggests a turn toward fusionist pyrotechnics, moves in with a quartet on Tuesday, Aug. 2. BOB MINTZER'S big band performs on Monday, July 25, and on Monday, Aug. 1, MEL LEWIS'S crowd returns to the fold. Music after ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Those who can resist the temptations of the large barroom here—pinball, video games, a dialogue with a budding logical positivist from Columbia U.—will find another, smaller room, where jazz musicians hold sway. Trumpeter JOHN MC NEIL and a quartet go at it Wednesday through Sunday, July 27-31; OLIVER LAKE, one of the alto voices of the World Saxophone Quartet, brings in his funk-reggae band, JUMP UP, on Wednesday, Aug. 3. Music from about nine. Dining.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A bright, spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. KIRK LIGHTSEY, a pianist with a bright, ringing attack who has played with Dexter Gordon, James Moody, Sonny Stitt, and other boppers and hard-boppers, works with bassist RAY DRUMMOND through Saturday, July 30. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

GLORIA ESTEFAN AND MIAMI SOUND MACHINE—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Monday through Wednesday, July 25-27, at 8.

MILTON NASCIMENTO—Radio City Music Hall. Thursday, July 28, at 8.

ROBERT PLANT—With Cheap Trick. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Friday, July 29, at 8.)

ROBERT PALMER—Radio City Music Hall. Tuesday, Aug. 2, at 8.

JAZZ IN JULY—Tuesday, July 26: Kenny Davern, Major Holley, Ed Polcer, Dick Hyman, and Dorothy Loudon. . . . ¶ Wednesday, July 27: Vince Giordano & the Nighthawks, Terry Waldo's Gotham City Stompers, Andy Stein, and the Howard Alden–Dan Barrett quintet. . . . ¶ Thursday, July 28: Walt Levinsky's Great American Swing Band, Lynn Roberts, and Bob Haggart. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Evenings at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES

GEORGE AULT (1891-1948)—Works on paper. Through Friday, July 29. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

JOSÉ CAMPECHE (1751-1809)—A Puerto Rican who recorded the high society of San Juan in his portraits. Forty-seven of his paintings are currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum. Through Sept. 25. (Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St. Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

JOSEPH CORNELL (1903-72)—Collages from the sixties. Through Sept. 16. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

LAURA FOREMAN / BONNIE LUCAS—Assemblages. / Paintings on paper and assemblages. Through Saturday, July 30. (Yi, 249 Centre St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

ADA GILMORE (1883-1955)—Color woodcuts and watercolors. Through Saturday, July 30. (Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

JULIO GONZÁLEZ (1876-1942)—Paintings and drawings. Through Aug. 19. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

COLIN GRAY—Sculptures in mixed-up mediums, including one piece called "Oddballs"—a hundred and fifty or so tennis balls cut to resemble spiders, tongues, and tulips, and arranged in a swarm on the wall. Through Friday, July 29. (Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. Closed Mondays.)

DAVID HOCKNEY—A number of gallery shows are being held to coincide with his retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum. Drawings at Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Through Friday, July 29. . . . ¶ Early graphics at Ingber, 415 West Broadway. Through Saturday, July 30. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

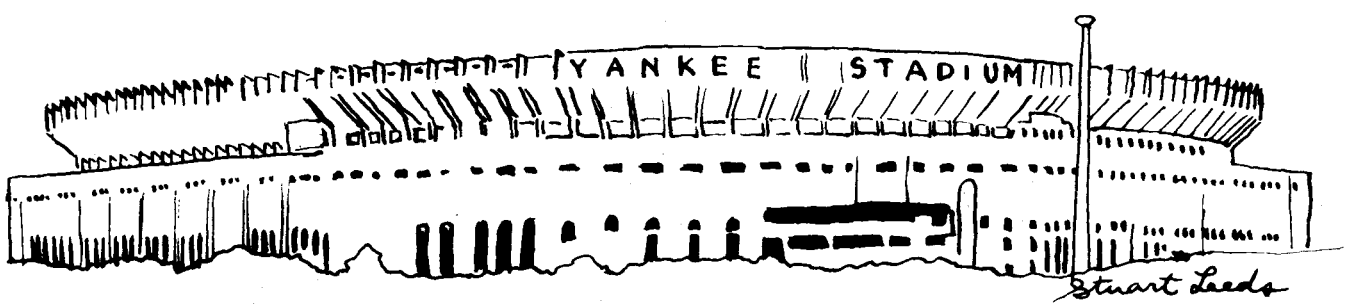
OLIVER JOHNSON—New paintings and drawings. Through Aug. 26. (Felicie, 141 E. 56th St.)

CHARLES MOORE—Drawings the architect made for such projects as the Beverly Hills Civic Center and a condominium complex in Sea Ranch, California. Through Aug. 12. (Protetch, 560 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

REE MORTON (1936-77)—More than twenty of the sculptor's sketchbooks—containing drawings, quotations, and reminders ("Read some Montana history," "Ask to meet Louise Bourgeois")—are shown in cases, along with selected photocopied pages. Through Aug. 27. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

DENNIS OPPENHEIM—A model and drawings for a sculpture the artist recently installed in Seoul's Olympic Park. Through Aug. 12. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

PICASSO (1881-1973)—Paintings, sculptures,



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART—Cont'd

and prints from 1950 to 1973. Through Friday, July 29. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St.)

Milton Resnick—Densely painted abstractions done in the late fifties. Through Friday, July 29. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Fulvio Testa—Dark small-scale watercolors of valleys, alleyways, and hills. Through Friday, July 29. (Bernard, 33 E. 74th St.)

Group Shows—At the **Blum Helman,** 20 W. 57th St.: Paintings by Michael Young, Jack Barth, and Joan Nelson. Through Friday, July 29. . . . **Davidson,** 415 West Broadway: Still-lifes on canvas and on paper by Carol Anthony, Deborah Deichler, Janis Goodman, Ruth Miller, and George Stave. Through Sept. 2. . . . **Frumkin-Adams,** 50 W. 57th St.: Sculptures by Mel Chin and Carol Kumata, and paintings by Jeanette Cole and David Krueger. Through Aug. 12. . . . **Gibson,** 568 Broadway: Paintings in various mediums, including pieces by Merrill Wagner and Suzan Etkin. Through Aug. 26. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Gorney,** 100 Greene St.: Two works by Joel Otterson, one of which, subtitled "Hot Wheels from Hell," is a stereo-equipped "love seat" upholstered with nylon rock-and-roll banners and stocked with compact disks; an installation by Barbara Bloom called "The Seven Deadly Sins," in which Sloth, for instance, appears as a blue-and-white beach chair and a copy of "Paradise Lost" opened to Book Two; and a painting by Justen Ladda. Through Friday, July 29. . . . **Herstand,** 24 W. 57th St.: Sculptures and drawings by Auguste Rodin, Isamu Noguchi, and Jenny Lee, among others. Through Sept. 16. . . . **Hoffman,** 429 West Broadway: Paintings by Elizabeth Magill, Shahnaz Said, Yuko Shiraishi, and Suzanne Treister. Through Friday, July 29. . . . **Jacobson,** 50 W. 57th St.: Works that create an illusion of depth, including a painting by Gregory Amenoff, a drawing by Wayne Thiebaud, a construction by Joseph Cornell, and sculptures by David Kezur. Through Friday, July 29. . . . **Littlejohn Smith,** 133 Greene St.: Paintings, constructions, sculptures, and photographs in a show highlighting the influence of billboard art. The artists include James Rosenquist, Walker Evans, and Julie Heffernan. Through Saturday, July 30. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.) . . . **Nolan,** 560 Broadway: Works on paper by, among others, Miriam Cahn, Sigmar Polke, and Arnulf Rainer. Through Friday, July 29. . . . **Pearl,** 420 West Broadway: Works by three painters from Chicago—Didier Nolet, Dan Gustin, and Rodney Carswell—and by a sculptor from Philadelphia, Stephen Robin. Through Aug. 12. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Shainman,** 560 Broadway: Large and small paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs by Bruno Ceccobelli, Petah Coyne, and others. Through Friday, July 29. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Sharpe,** 152 Wooster St.: Sculptures by Terry Rosenberg and Steve Wood, and paintings by Stephen Williams. Through Aug. 5. . . . **Tilton,** 24 W. 57th St.: Paintings and drawings by Hispanic artists, including Patricia González and Robert Gil de Montes. Through Aug. 15. . . . **Toll,** 146 Greene St.: Paintings by Louise Fishman, Joan Mitchell, and David Reed. Through Thursday, July 28. . . . **York,** 21 E. 65th St.: Paintings and works on paper by Joseph Stella, James Wells Champney, and Lilly Martin Spencer, among others. Through Friday, July 29. . . . **Zarre,** 379 West Broadway: Abstract paintings, including works by Susan Crile, William Fares, and Jonathan Santlofer. Through Saturday, July 30. (Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)

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	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3			

¶ Exhibitions of works by gallery artists can also be seen at: **Fischbach,** 24 W. 57th St. . . . **Galerie St. Etienne,** 24 W. 57th St. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Heidenberg,** 50 W. 57th St. . . . **Marcus,** 578 Broadway. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Munroe,** 415 West Broadway. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Nosei,** 100 Prince St. . . . **Pretto,** 103 Sullivan St. (Opens at 1 Tuesdays through Saturdays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Joan Fontcuberta—Photographs by an artist whose work is collaged and frottaged. Through Sept. 10. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Karekin Goekjian—Photographs taken by the light of the moon, a strobe, and a halogen flashlight. The time exposures range from fifteen to forty minutes. Through Thursday, July 28. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

Robert Mapplethorpe—The Whitney Museum will mount a show of his photographs. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Garry Winogrand (1928-84)—Black-and-white photographs dating from the fifties, sixties, and seventies. Through Aug. 31. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St. Open Saturdays. A retrospective of the artist's work can currently be seen at the Museum of Modern Art.)

Group Shows—At the **Burden,** 20 E. 23rd St.: Harry Callahan, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Sylvia Plachy are some of the artists who have photographs in a big exhibit entitled "Swimmers." Through Saturday, July 30. (Opens at 1 Tuesdays through Saturdays.) . . . **Gladstone,** 99 Greene St.: Portraiture by Robert Mapplethorpe, Richard Prince, Thomas Ruff, and Jeff Wall. Through Friday, July 29. . . . **International Center of Photography,** 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.: "Collaboration in Recent American Photography," including works by Laurie Simmons and Allan McCollum, Clegg & Guttmann, and Suzanne Hellmuth and Jock Reynolds. Through Sept. 11. (Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.) . . . **Lieberman & Saul,** 155 Spring St.: Photographs by Zeke Berman, Andrea Modica, and Richard Ross, among others. Through Sept. 10. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **Witkin,** 415 West Broadway: Photographs of trains, planes, and boats by Laura Gilpin, Robert Doisneau, André Kertész, and many others. Through Aug. 19. (Closed Mondays; opens at noon on Saturdays.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The earliest work in the David Hockney retrospective is a self-portrait done when the artist was seventeen. Mr. Hockney has also recorded the Acoustiguide tape for the show, on which he explains his ideas and techniques. Through Aug. 14. . . . ¶ Ninety paintings and drawings by Paul Klee, gifts to the museum from Heinz Berggruen. Through Sunday, July 31. . . . ¶ Religious paintings and portraits by the eighteenth-century Puerto Rican artist José Campeche. Through Sept. 25. Works by the artist are also at the Museo del Barrio. (The Metropolitan is open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Deconstructivist Architecture," drawings, models, and site plans by Coop Himmelblau, Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry, Zaha M. Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Daniel Libeskind, and Bernard Tschumi. The chief organizer of the exhibit was Philip Johnson, who describes these architects as having eschewed harmony, unity, and clarity for the sake of disharmony, fracturing, and mystery. Through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ The Garry Winogrand retrospective. Through Aug. 16. Pace-MacGill has a complementary show. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . **Note:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10; on these nights musicians from the Juilliard School perform works by John Cage and others at 7:30.

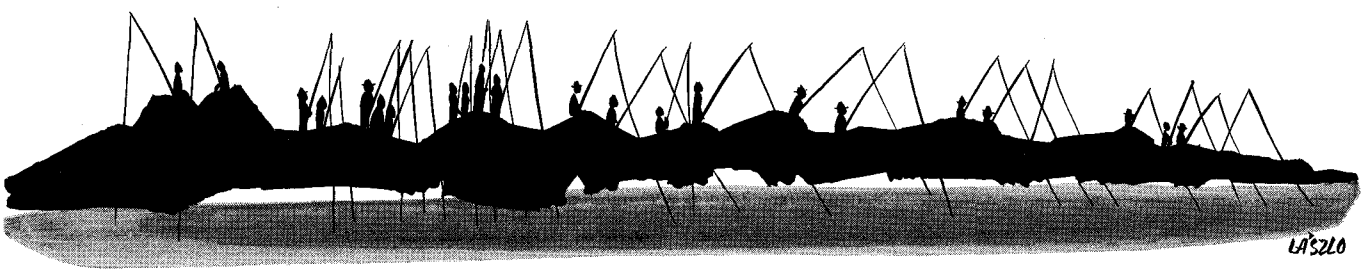
Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of works by Georges Braque. Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ A loan show of sixty modern paintings from the National Gallery in Prague, consisting entirely of works that are in America for the first time. The artists include Cézanne, Chagall, Klimt, Gauguin, and Matisse, and their Czech counterparts. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Frank Gehry's architecture is surveyed in more than two hundred and fifty drawings, photographs, and models. The projects represented include the Fishdance Restaurant in Kobe, Japan, and the Laser Laboratory Building at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. Also on display are several walk-through constructions. Through Oct. 2. . . . **Photography:** Fifteen years' worth of Robert Mapplethorpe's prints will be represented in a show of nudes, portraits, and still-lifes. Starts Thursday, July 28. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Uses of Photography in Contemporary Art," a small exhibit from the permanent collection which contains works by Julie Wachtel, Ellen Carey, and David Hockney. Through Oct. 10. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Fossils from China—including several dicynodonts that are about two hundred and fifty million years old—along with some of their North American counterparts taken from the museum's collection. . . . ¶ Three Buddhist monks, including Lobsang Samten—an attendant to the Dalai Lama—create a sand mandala before your eyes. The sand men do not create on Mondays. Through Aug. 21. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A show on the contemporary partnership between artists and architects, focussing on the artists' contributions. There are, for instance, stone seats by Scott Burton that are like those he made for the Equitable Center, and objects in glass by three artists who worked on the redesigned Rainbow Room. Through Sept. 4. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge



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after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—Two feather suits (complete with feather crowns) that Roger Chapelain-Midy designed for the Paris Opéra's production of "Die Zauberflöte" are among the costumes on display in an exhibit documenting the history of the Paris Opéra House. Also included are costume designs, in watercolors, by Erté, André Derain, and Yves Saint Laurent, original architectural studies by Charles Garnier, and stage jewelry. Through Sept. 25. . . . ¶ The museum's garden is currently dotted with lawn chairs in every conceivable style. These bizarre—but comfortable—pieces are the work of thirty-one San Francisco Bay Area artists, including Martha Schwartz, Veronica di Rosa, and Daniel Friedlander. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—Paintings and drawings Henry Clay Frick collected as a young connoisseur in the early eighteen-eighties have been brought from his Pittsburgh residence, Clayton, and hung alongside some of the Old Masters he acquired later. In the former group are works by Jean-Charles Cazin, Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret, and William M. Harnett. Through Aug. 7. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A retrospective of etchings, woodcuts, and lithographs by the English painter Graham Sutherland (1903-1980). The prints range from pastoral landscapes to expressionistic renderings of birds and insects. Through Sept. 30. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show in which Jewish themes are explored in video art: installations by Juan Downey, Beryl Korot, and Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman, mounted in separate galleries; and six videos that run on a single, continuous tape for just over two hours, including "Harold's Bar Mitzvah," by Bart Friedman, and "Women in the Camps," by Barbara Rosenthal. Through Sept. 1. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A comprehensive exhibit of the works of Beatrix Potter (1866-1943) which includes watercolors of her familiar subjects (Peter Rabbit, Jemima Puddle-Duck) and her not so familiar subjects—insects, plants, and fossils. Through Aug. 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Uffizi Gallery, in Florence, repository of nearly thirteen hundred artists' self-portraits, has sent a selection of thirty—by Andrea del Sarto, Annibale Carracci, Walter Crane, and others—in an exchange show with the National Academy, which sent a selection of its thirteen hundred self-portraits to Florence. Through Sunday, July 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

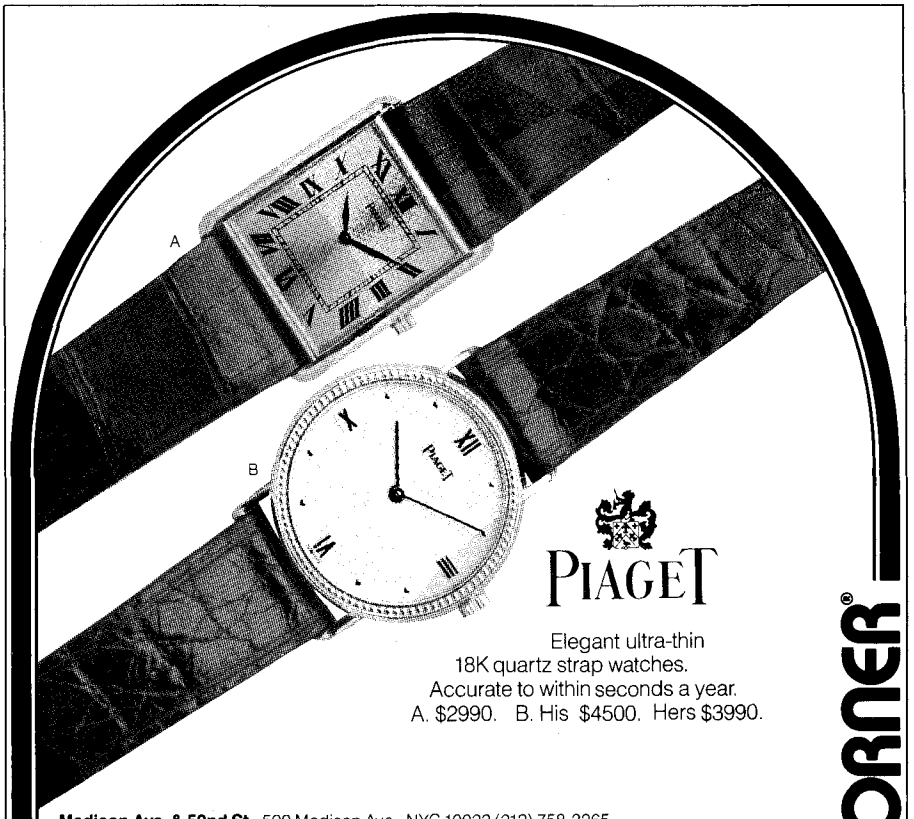
Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"The Portrayal of the Black Musician in American Art," a show of paintings, sculptures, and lithographs dating from 1890 to 1970. Through Aug. 28. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Shea Stadium is 1-718 507-8499, and for Yankee Stadium 293-6000.)

Baseball—yankees at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Milwaukee, Monday through Thursday, July 25-28, at 7:30. . . . **mets** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Pittsburgh, Friday, July 29, at 7:35; Saturday, July 30, at 7:05; Sunday, July 31, at 1:35; and Monday, Aug. 1, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Chicago, Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 2-3, at 7:35.

Racing—At **belmont:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1; through Monday, Aug. 1. The Sword Dancer Handicap, Saturday, July 30. . . .



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SPORTS–Cont'd

MONMOUTH PARK, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. Through Saturday, Sept. 3. The Haskell Invitational, Saturday, July 30. . . . **ATLANTIC CITY RACE COURSE,** McKee City, N.J.: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15. Through Saturday, Sept. 3. . . . **SARATOGA:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1:30, from Wednesday, Aug. 3, through Monday, Aug. 29.

TROTTING—At **MEADOWLANDS:** Weeknights at 7:30; through Friday, Aug. 19. . . . **YONKERS RACEWAY:** Nightly at 8, and Tuesdays at 1. . . . **SARATOGA RACEWAY,** Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 7:45.

MUSIC

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Tuesday evening, July 26: "Rigoletto," with Faith Esham, Susanne Marsee, Frederick Burchinal, Richard Leech, and Stephen Dupont; conducted by Elio Boncompagni. . . . ¶ Friday evening, July 29: "La Bohème," with Frances Ginsberg, Margaret Cusack, Robert Grayson, Robert Orth, and Stanley Wexler; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, July 30: "Die Zauberflöte," with Elizabeth Hynes, Rachel Rosales, Gran Wilson, Stephen Dickson, and Rodney Godshall; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, July 30: "La Traviata," with Marilyn Mims, Stephen O'Mara, and Pablo Elvira; Michael Morgan. . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, July 31: "The Merry Widow," with Leigh Munro, Ruth Golden, Richard White, and Paul Austin Kelly; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Aug. 2: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Erie Mills, Jane Shaulis, Robert Orth, and Gran Wilson; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Aug. 3: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Leslie Richards-Pellegrini, Stefano Algieri, and Rodger Hugh Wangerin; and "Pagliacci," with Marianna Christos, Jon Frederic West, Pablo Elvira, and Ned Barth. Sergiu Comissiona conducting both. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Evenings at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 1. Through Sunday, Nov. 20.)

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL—Tuesday and Wednesday, July 26-27, at 8: Raymond Leppard conducting the Festival Orchestra, with Benita Valente, soprano, and Tatiana Troyanos, mezzo-soprano. . . . ¶ Thursday, July 28, at 8: Emanuel Ax and Peter Serkin, piano. . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, July 29-30, at 8: David Willcocks conducting the Festival Orchestra in choral works by Mozart. With Kaaren Erickson, soprano; Denise Woods, mezzo-soprano; Stanford Olsen, tenor; John Cheek, bass; and the Westminster Choir. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 31, at 7:30: The Canadian Brass and brass players from the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony. Kazuyoshi Akiyama will conduct portions of the program. . . . ¶ Monday, Aug. 1, at 8: The Emerson String Quartet, with Heinz Holliger, oboe, and Lilian Kallir, piano. . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 2-3, at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Festival Orchestra, with Jean-Pierre Rampal, flute, and Stephen Hough, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Through Saturday, Aug. 27.)

BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—David Zinman conducting two all-Beethoven programs, using Beethoven's own metronome markings and phrasings. Sergiu Luca will be the violin soloist on the second night. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Tuesday and Wednesday, July 26-27, at 8.)

ECHO HANDBELL RINGERS OF TOKYO—Katsumi Kodama conducting an ensemble whose instruments are ninety bronze handbells. The program includes traditional Japanese folk music and transcriptions of Western classics. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Friday, July 29, at 8.)

ELAINE COMPARONE AND THE BACH FAMILY STRINGS—Harpsichord and chamber ensemble, with Robert Stallman, flute. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Wednesday, Aug. 3, at 8. For tickets, call 666-9427.)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL—Kevin Kline and Blythe Danner are adorable as the perennially warring lovers in Gerald Freedman's **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.** The production, which stresses the buffoonery of romance over the romance of buffoonery, is probably more lighthearted than one's college English professor would like it to be, but it's great fun for a fine summer evening. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. Nightly, except Monday, at 8. Through Sunday, July 31. For information about free tickets, call 861-7277.)

MUSIC CRUISES—Concerts on excursion boats. Monday, July 25: Dizzy Gillespie. . . . Monday, Aug. 1: Herbie Mann, with Astrud Gilberto. (On the DeWitt Clinton, South Street Seaport, Pier 16, East River at Fulton St. The boat leaves at 7 and 10. For information about tickets, call 406-3434.) . . . ¶ Friday, July 29: Buddy Guy and Junior Wells, with A. C. Reed. (Hudson River Dayliner, Pier 81, Twelfth Ave. at 41st St. The boat leaves at 9. For tickets, call 947-5850.)

DAMROSCH PARK, Lincoln Center—Tuesday, July 26, at 7: Abbey Simon, piano. . . . ¶ Friday, July 29, and Sunday, July 31, at 8: Ainslee Cox leading the Goldman Memorial Band. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Aug. 3, at 8:15: The Paul Taylor Dance Company.

WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK—Tuesday, July 26, at 8: Henry Schuman conducting the Festival Orchestra. With Ole Böhn, violin. (In the event of rain, the concert will take place at Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St.) . . . ¶ Tuesday, Aug. 2, at 8: Johannes Somary conducting the Festival Orchestra, in an all-Mozart program. With Yuval Waldman, violin; Margaret Schecter, flute; and Janet Paulus, harp. (In the event of rain, the concert will take place at the Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl.)

MUSIC FESTIVAL ON THE PIER—The Miller beer people's summer series. Wednesday, July 27: Roy Orbison and Southside Johnny & the Jukes. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 30: Phyllis Hyman, Bill Withers, Pieces of a Dream, and Gerald Albright. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. Evenings at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

CENTRAL PARK BAND SHELL—Thursday, July 28, at 7:30: Vincent La Selva conducting the New York Grand Opera in Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera." . . . ¶ Friday, July 29, at 8:30: The Nina Martin Performance Company, with Anita Feldman Tap. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 30, at 3: Moses Rascoe and Johnny Copeland. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 31, at 3: Manny Oquendo & Conjunto Libre and Frank Ferrucci & the Music of the Americas Ensemble. (Mid-Park at 72nd St. For rain-date information, call 860-1335.)

PROSPECT PARK BAND SHELL—Friday evening, July 29: The David Parsons Company and Iso. (Rain date, Aug. 1.) . . . ¶ Saturday evening, July 30: David Dorfman Dance and the Elisa Monte Dance Company. (Rain date, Aug. 1.) . . . ¶ Sunday evening, July 31: The Jean-Léon Destiné Afro-Haitian Dance Company and the Marie Brooks Caribbean Dance Theatre. (Rain date, Aug. 2.) (Evenings at 8.)

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT—Robert Bonfiglio and a string quartet; and Loren Schoenberg's Big Band, with Barbara Lea. (Pier 16, East River at Fulton St. Saturday, July 30, at 6:30.)

RIVERSIDE PARK ROTUNDA—Women of the Calabash. (W. 79th St., near the Boat Basin. Sunday, July 31, at 4.)

IN THE COUNTRY

SUMMERFARE—Final programs in the series—**"LE NOZZE DI FIGARO,"** the contemporary version

by Peter Sellars and Craig Smith. With an orchestra and vocalists. (Wednesday, July 27, and Friday, July 29, at 8, and Sunday, July 31, at 2:30.) . . . **"LINE ONE,"** a rock musical performed in English by the original Berlin cast. (Wednesday through Saturday, July 27-30, at 8.) . . . **"SUMMER OF THE SEVENTEENTH DOLL,"** Ray Lawler's 1955 play, presented by the Sydney Theatre Company. (Wednesday through Saturday, July 27-30, at 8.) . . . **"ELVIRE JOUVET 40,"** a dramatic reënactment of Louis Jouvet's directions (1940) for the part of Elvire in Molière's "Dom Juan." Performed in French by Philippe Clévenot and Maria de Medeiros. (Thursday and Friday, July 28-29, at 8:30, and Saturday, July 30, at 6.) . . . **"GREED,"** Erich von Stroheim's 1924 silent film, with accompaniment by the Philharmonia Virtuosi. Carl Davis, who composed the score, will conduct. (Friday and Saturday, July 29-30, at 8:30.) . . . **HAYDN'S SIX "PARIS" SYMPHONIES** will be performed back-to-back, with an hour-long break for dinner. Craig Smith will conduct. (Saturday, July 30, at 6:30.) . . . **"BEN-HUR,"** Fred Niblo's 1925 silent film, with accompaniment by the Philharmonia Virtuosi. Carl Davis, who composed the score, will conduct. (Sunday, July 31, at 2:30.) (State University of New York at Purchase. For information about tickets and about round-trip bus transportation from Lincoln Center, call 1-914 253-5900.)

CARAMOOR MUSIC FESTIVAL—Thursday, July 28, at 4:15, and Friday, July 29, at 9: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 30, at 8:30: Raymond Leppard conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's, with Andrea Luchessini, piano. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 31, at 5:30: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble in an all-Bach program. (Katonah, N.Y. Through Sunday, Aug. 21. Trains leaving Grand Central Terminal on Saturdays at 2:48 and 5:48, and on Sundays at 3:48, are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

TANGLEWOOD—The summer residence of the Boston Symphony. Tuesday, July 26, at 8:30: The Takács String Quartet, in an all-Bartók program. . . . ¶ Wednesday, July 27, at 8:30: Harry Ellis Dickson conducting the Boston Pops. . . . ¶ Thursday, July 28, at 8:30: The Bartók String Quartet also presenting an all-Bartók program. . . . ¶ Friday, July 29, at 9: Gunther Herbig conducting the orchestra, with Mikhail Rudy, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday, July 30, at 8:30: Pascal Verrot conducting the orchestra, with Malcolm Lowe, violin, and Alfred Genovese, oboe. . . . ¶ Sunday, July 31, at 2:30: James Galway, flute, and Phillip Moll, piano. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Aug. 2, at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa and Leon Fleisher conducting the orchestra, with James Galway as the soloist. (Lenox, Mass. Through Sunday, Aug. 28. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL—Through Saturday, July 30: The Miami City Ballet. . . . ¶ Tuesday through Saturday, Aug. 2-6: Pilobolus. (Becket, Mass. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8:30; and Saturdays at 2 and 8:30. Through Saturday, Aug. 27. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER—The Paul Taylor Dance Company in a brief engagement. Monday evening, July 25; Wednesday and Thursday evenings, July 27-28; and Saturday evening, July 30: Program A. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, July 26; Thursday matinée, July 28; and Friday evening, July 29: Program B. (Saratoga Springs. Evenings at 8:15. Matinées at 2. For information about tickets, call 1-518 587-3330.)

COMING EVENTS

(A listing for forehanded readers.)

RACING—At **BELMONT:** Aug. 31-Oct. 17. . . . **MEADOWLANDS:** Sept. 5-Dec. 31.

TENNIS—United States Open Championships. (U.S.T.A. National Tennis Center, Flushing Meadow. Aug. 29-Sept. 11.)

OTHER DATES—The Central Park Zoo will reopen on Monday, Aug. 8. . . . ¶ The Republican National Convention will start on Aug. 15 in New Orleans. . . . ¶ The Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit will be held Sept. 3-5, Sept. 10-11, and Sept. 17-18. . . . ¶ Labor Day falls on Sept. 5.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

PUBLIC THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
(Separate admissions) "Loose Connections" (directed by Richard Eyre); and "The Color of Destiny" (1987; Jorge Duran; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese).

MOVIELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.
Theatre 2: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 3: "Caddyshack II" (Allan Arkush), with Jackie Mason and Chevy Chase.

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.

MURRAY HILL, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"Bull Durham" (†).

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Big Top Pee-wee" (Randal Kleiser), with Pee-wee Herman.
Theatre 3: Through July 28: "Coming to America." From July 29 (tentative): "Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear" (George A. Romero).

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through July 28: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.
From July 29: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise.

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Bambi" (†).

SUTTON, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Big" (†).

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Caddyshack II" (Allan Arkush), with Jackie Mason and Chevy Chase.

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Midnight Run" (Martin Brest), with Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin.
Theatre 2: "Midnight Run."

D. W. GRIFFITH, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through July 28: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
From July 29: "Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear" (George A. Romero).

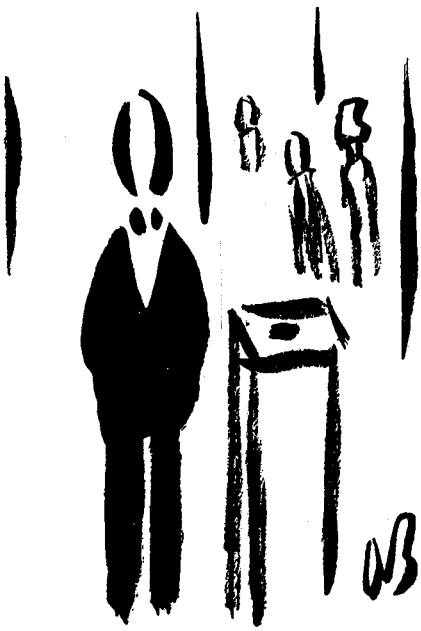
BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.
Theatre 2: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

CINEMA I AND II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Pascali's Island" (James Dearden), with Ben Kingsley, Charles Dance, and Helen Mirren.
Theatre 2: Through July 28: "Big Business" (†). From July 29: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise.

GEMINI I AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 2: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Bull Durham" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Top Pee-wee" (Randal Kleiser), with Pee-wee Herman.



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 11.

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Mr. North" (Danny Huston), with Anthony Edwards.

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"A Fish Called Wanda" (†).

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Caddyshack II" (Allan Arkush), with Jackie Mason and Chevy Chase.

LOEWS ORPHEUM I AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.
Theatre 2: Through July 28: (Matinées only) "Bambi" (†); and (evenings only) "Big Business" (†). From July 29: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise.

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM I AND 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 2: "God Doesn't Believe in Us Anymore" (1981; directed by Axel Corti; in German); and "Santa Fe" (1985; Axel Corti; in German). From Aug. 3: "Alice" (Jan Svankmajer).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

BLEECKER ST. CINEMA I AND 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "A Taxing Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 28: "Tampopo" (†). From July 29: "Family Viewing" (Atom Egoyan).

WAVERLY I AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through July 28: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood. From July 29: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through July 28: "Big Business" (†). From July 29: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise.

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Hairspray" (†).

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "Midnight Run" (Martin Brest), with Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin.

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Manchurian Candidate" (†).
Theatre 2: Through July 28: "White Mischief" (†). From July 29: "Tokyo Olympiad" (1965; Kon Ichikawa), a documentary on the 1964 Summer Olympic Games.
Theatre 3: "Patti Rocks" (†).
Theatre 4: "A World Apart" (†).

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through July 28: "Bambi" (†). From July 29: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Midnight Run" (Martin Brest), with Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin.
Theatre 3: "Bull Durham" (†).

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Bambi" (†).

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"A World Apart" (†).

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Shame" (Steve Jodrell).

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"White Mischief" (†).

CARNEGIE SCREENING ROOM, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).

PARIS, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"A Handful of Dust" (†).

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through July 28: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.
From July 29: To be announced.

LOEWS PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"A Fish Called Wanda" (†).

LINCOLN PLAZA 1, 2, AND 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Commissar" (1967; Alexander Askoldov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 3: "Boyfriends and Girlfriends" ("L'Ami de Mon Amie") (†).

CINEMA STUDIO I AND 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Babette's Feast" (†).
Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" (†).

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through July 28: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.
From July 29: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise.

EMBASSY 72ND ST. I AND 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "Big Business" (†).

LOEWS 84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Caddyshack II" (Allan Arkush), with Jackie Mason and Chevy Chase.
Theatre 3: "Bull Durham" (†).
Theatre 4: "Big Top Pee-wee" (Randal Kleiser), with Pee-wee Herman.
Theatre 5: Through July 28: "Coming to America." From July 29 (tentative): "Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear" (George A. Romero).
Theatre 6: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud.

METRO CINEMA I AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through July 28: "Bambi" (†). From July 29: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through July 28: "Red Heat"

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

(Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi. From July 29: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (316-6660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Midnight Run" (Martin Brest), with Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin.
Theatre 2: "Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: Through July 28: "Arthur 2 on the Rocks" (directed by Bud Yorkin), with Dudley Moore, Liza Minnelli, and John Gielgud. From July 29: "Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear" (George A. Romero).
Theatre 2: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi.
Theatre 3: "Caddyshack II" (Allan Arkush), with Jackie Mason and Chevy Chase.
Theatre 4: "Short Circuit 2" (Kenneth Johnson), with Fisher Stevens and Michael McKean.
Theatre 5: "Die Hard" (John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, and Alexander Godunov.
Theatre 6: Through July 28: "Bull Durham" (†). From July 29: "Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear."

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
Through July 28: "Big Business" (†).
From July 29: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Big Top Pee-wee" (Randal Kleiser), with Pee-wee Herman.
Theatre 3: "Bambi" (†).
Theatre 4: "Crocodile Dundee II" (John Cornell), with Paul Hogan.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Phantasm II" (Don Coscarelli).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.
Theatre 2: "Midnight Run" (Martin Brest), with Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"Big" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
July 25: "Rear Window" (1954; directed by Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Grace Kelly, and Wendell Corey; and "Vertigo" (1958; Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Kim Novak, and Barbara Bel Geddes.
July 26-27: "The Lady Eve" (1941; Preston Sturges), with Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda, and Charles Coburn; and "Sullivan's Travels" (1941; Preston Sturges), with Veronica Lake and Joel McCrea.
July 28-30: "Roman Holiday" (1953; William Wyler), with Audrey Hepburn, Gregory Peck, and Eddie Albert; and "Funny Face" (1957; Stanley Donen), with Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire, Kay Thompson, and Michel Auclair.
July 31-Aug. 2: "Top Hat" (1935; Mark Sandrich), with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire; and "Shall We Dance" (1937; Mark Sandrich), with Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire, Edward Everett Horton, Jerome Cowan, and Eric Blore.
From Aug. 3: "The Band Wagon" (1953; Vincente Minnelli), with Fred Astaire, Cyd Charisse, and Nanette Fabray; and "The Barkleys of Broadway" (1949; Charles Walters), with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

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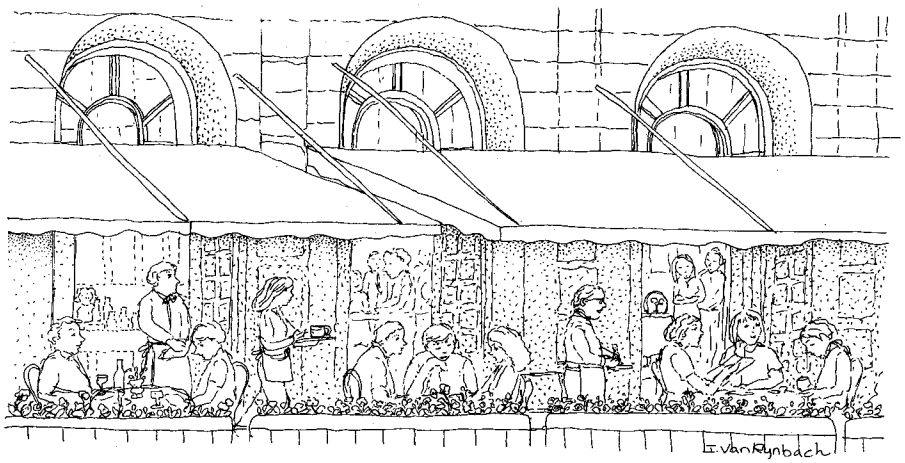
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through July 26: Two programs of Warner Brothers cartoons shown each day—one program featuring the work of Chuck Jones.
July 27-28: "Vagabond" (1985; Agnès Varda; in French), with Sandrine Bonnaire and Macha Méril; and "Entre Nous" (1983; Diane Kurys; in French), with Isabelle Huppert, Miou-Miou, Guy Marchand, and Jean-Pierre Bacri.
July 29-30: "River's Edge" (1987; Tim Hunter), with Daniel Roebuck, Crispin Glover, Dennis Hopper, and Joshua Miller; and "Blue Velvet" (1986; David Lynch), with Kyle MacLachlan, Isabella Rossellini, Dennis Hopper, and Laura Dern.
July 31: "Diva" (†) and "The Moon in the Gutter" (†).
Aug. 1-2: Two programs of Warner Brothers cartoons shown each day—one program featuring the work of Chuck Jones.
From Aug. 3: "The Untouchables" (1987; Brian De Palma), with Kevin Costner, Robert De Niro, Sean Connery, Andy Garcia, and Charles Martin Smith; and "Scarface" (1983 †).

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
July 25: "Home Remedy" (1988; Maggie Greenwald); and "Repo Man" (1984; Alex Cox), with Emilio Estevez, Harry Dean Stanton, Tracey Walter, Vonetta McGee, and Fox Harris.
July 26: "Home Remedy;" and "Smithereens" (1982; Susan Seidelman), with Susan Berman.
July 27: "Home Remedy;" and "Blood Simple" (1985; Joel Coen), with John Getz.
July 28: "Home Remedy;" and "Putney Swope" (1969; Robert Downey).
July 29-31: "The Blob" (1958; Irvin S. Yeaworth, Jr.), with Steve McQueen; and "Earth vs. the Flying Saucers" (1956; Fred F. Sears), with Hugh Marlowe, Joan Taylor, and Donald Curtis.
Aug. 1: "Forbidden Planet" (†); and "First Men in the Moon" (1964; Nathan Juran).
Aug. 2: "The Brain from Planet Arous" (1958; Nathan Hertz), with John Agar; and "The Crawling Eye" (1958; Quentin Lawrence), with Forrest Tucker and Janet Munro.
From Aug. 3: "Red Planet Mars" (1952; Harry Horner); and "The Invasion of the Body Snatchers" (1956 †).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
July 25: "Li'l Abner" (1959; Melvin Frank), with Peter Palmer, Leslie Parrish, and Stubby Kaye; and "Red Garters" (1954; George Marshall), with Rosemary Clooney, Jack Carson, Guy Mitchell, Gene Barry, and Pat Crowley.
July 26: "America America" (1963; Elia Kazan), with Stathis Giallelis.
July 27: "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961; Blake Edwards), with Audrey Hepburn, George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Martin Balsam, and Mickey Rooney; and "Funny Face" (1957; Stanley Donen), with Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire, Kay Thompson, and Michel Auclair.
July 28: "Secret Beyond the Door" (1948; Fritz Lang), with Joan Bennett and Michael Redgrave; and "House by the River" (1950; Fritz Lang), with Louis Hayward, Jane Wyatt, Lee Bowman, and Dorothy Patrick.
July 29-30: "White Mischief" (†); and "Rita, Sue and Bob Too" (1987; Alan Clarke), with George Costigan, Siobhan Finneran, and Michelle Holmes.
July 31: "Devil in the Flesh" (1987; Marco Bellocchio; in Italian), with Maruschka Detmers and Federico Pitzalis; and "High Infidelity" (1964; four episodes by four directors; in Italian).
Aug. 1: "The Kindergarten" (1983; Yevgeny Yevtushenko; in Russian), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.
Aug. 2: "Manhunter" (1986; Michael Mann), with William L. Petersen; and "To Live and Die in L.A." (1985; William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe.
Aug. 3: "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (†) and "Jour de Fête" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
July 25: "The Earrings of Madame de . . ." (1953; Max Ophuls; in French), with Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux, and Vittorio De Sica; and "Le Plaisir" (1952; Max Ophuls; in French), with Claude Dauphin, Daniel Gélin, Simone Simon, Madeleine Renaud, and Jean Gabin.
July 26: "Lost Horizon" (1937; Frank Capra), with Ronald Colman, Margo, Sam Jaffe, and Edward Everett Horton; and "The Bitter Tea of General Yen" (1933; Frank Capra), with Barbara Stanwyck, Nils Asther, Gavin Gordon, and Walter Connolly.
July 27: "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner" (1962; Tony Richardson), with Michael Redgrave and Tom Courtenay; and "The Loved One" (1965; Tony Richardson), with Robert Morse, Jonathan Winters, John Gielgud, Robert Morley, Rod Steiger, Milton Berle, and Margaret Leighton.
July 28: "The Big Heat" (1953; Fritz Lang), with Glenn Ford and Gloria Grahame; and "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt" (1956; Fritz Lang), with Dana Andrews and Joan Fontaine.
July 29-30: "East of Eden" (†); and "Rebel Without a Cause" (1955; Nicholas Ray), with James Dean, Natalie Wood, Sal Mineo, Corey Allen, and Nick Adams.
July 31: "Dark Passage" (1947; Delmer Daves), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead; and "To Have and Have Not" (†).
Aug. 1: "Carmen" (1983; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Antonio Gades; and "El Amor Brujo" (1986; Carlos Saura; in Spanish).
Aug. 2: "Morocco" (†) and "Dishonored" (†).
Aug. 3: "Butterfield 8" (1960; Daniel Mann), with Elizabeth Taylor, Laurence Harvey, Eddie Fisher, and Dina Merrill; and



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"Daisy Kenyon" (1947; Otto Preminger), with Joan Crawford, Dana Andrews, and Henry Fonda.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

theatre 1: July 25 at 2:30: "History Is Made at Night" (1937; directed by Frank Borzage), with Charles Boyer, Jean Arthur, and Colin Clive. . . . ¶ July 25 at 6: "La Vida Nocturna" (1930; James Parrott; in Spanish, with no English subtitles), with Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy; and "Politiquerias" (1930; James W. Horne; in Spanish, with no English subtitles), with Laurel and Hardy. . . . ¶ July 26 at 2:30: "The Last Outlaw" (1936; Christy Cabanne), with Harry Carey, Hoot Gibson, and Tom Tyler; and "Randy Rides Alone" (1934; Harry Fraser), with John Wayne, George (Gabby) Hayes, and Yakima Canutt. . . . ¶ July 26 at 6: "For Whom the Bell Tolls" (1943; Sam Wood), with Gary Cooper, Ingrid Bergman, and Katina Paxinou. . . . ¶ July 28 at 2:30: "Young Romance" (1915; George Melford; a silent film), with Edith Taliaferro, Raymond Hatton, and Tom Forman; and "The Years of the Locust" (1916; George Melford; a silent film), with Fannie Ward and Walter Long. . . . ¶ July 28 at 6: "Hollow Triumph" (1948; Steve Sekely), with Paul Henreid, Joan Bennett, and Leslie Brooks. . . . ¶ July 29 at 2:30: "Week-Ends Only" (1932; Alan Crosland), with Joan Bennett, Ben Lyon, and John Halliday. . . . ¶ July 29 at 6: "Young Romance" and "The Years of the Locust." . . . ¶ July 30 at 2: "The Wizard of Oz" (1925; Larry Semon; a silent film), with Semon, Oliver Hardy, and Dorothy Dawn. . . . ¶ July 30 at 5: "Week-Ends Only." . . . ¶ July 31 at 2: "The Wizard of Oz" (1925). . . . ¶ July 31 at 5: "My Man Godfrey" (1936; Gregory La Cava), with William Powell, Carole Lombard, and Eugene Pallette. . . . ¶ Aug. 1 at 2:30: "Hollow Triumph." . . . ¶ Aug. 1 at 6: "The Red Menace" (1949; R. G. Springsteen), with Robert Rockwell and Anne Axman. . . . ¶ Aug. 2 at 2:30: "La Vida Nocturna" and "Politiquerias." . . . ¶ Aug. 2 at 6: "Copacabana" (1947; Alfred E. Green), with Groucho Marx, Carmen Miranda, and Gloria Jean.

theatre 2: Theatre closed.

French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—July 27 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "César" (1936; Marcel Pagnol; in French, with English subtitles), with Raimu, Orane Démazis, Pierre Fresnay, Alida Rouffe, Fernand Charpin, and André Fouché. . . . ¶ Aug. 3 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Baker's Wife" (1938; Marcel Pagnol; in French, with English subtitles), with Raimu, Ginette Leclerc, Fernand Charpin, Robert Vattier, and Alida Rouffe.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—July 28 at 8: "Intolerance" (1916; D. W. Griffith; a silent film), with Constance Talmadge and Lillian Gish. Original organ score written and played by Lee Erwin.

Murder, Mystery and Mayhem—A series of films set in New York City during the thirties, forties, and fifties. July 31 at 2: "The House on 92nd Street" (1945; Henry Hathaway), with William Eythe, Lloyd Nolan, Signe Hasso, and Gene Lockhart. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. 873-3400.)

Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. (82nd St. entrance on Tuesdays) (570-3949)—July 26: "Dark Victory" (1939; Edmund Goulding), with Bette Davis, George Brent, Humphrey Bogart, and Geraldine Fitzgerald. . . . ¶ July 27: "The Apartment" (1960; Billy Wilder), with Jack Lemmon, Shirley MacLaine, Fred MacMurray, Ray Walston, and Edie Adams. . . . ¶ July 28: "The Natural" (1984; Barry Levinson), with Robert Redford and Glenn Close. (All showings at 8. Tickets available one hour before performance time.)

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Through September 10, "Woody Allen: The Television Work," featuring Allen's 1969 one-hour television special and a thirty-minute compilation of sketches he did between 1958 and 1967. Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 12:05, 1:45, and 3:30. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

Au Revoir les Enfants ("Goodbye, Children")—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boys' attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/22/88.) (Carnegie Screening Room.)

Babette's Feast—In a village on Denmark's gray, blustery Jutland peninsula, sometime in the eighteen-eighties, Babette (Stéphane Audran), the French servant of a pair of elderly unmarried sisters (Birgitte Federspiel and Bodil Kjer), prepares a special dinner for her employers and their guests—a lavish, one-time-only orgy of haute cuisine served to a group of devout Lutherans who are used to receiving the Lord's bounty in the form of grim little slabs of boiled fish. Adapting one of Isak Dinesen's "Anecdotes of Destiny," Gabriel Axel, the writer-director, tells this simple tale simply. He establishes a lulling, bedtime-story tone right from the start, perhaps too successfully: our eyelids begin to seem very heavy after twenty minutes or so. The whole thing turns out to be about the consolations of art, and the union of "righteousness and bliss." The film is more righteous than blissful: a more austere celebration of the pleasures of the senses would be difficult to imagine. In Danish and French. —T.R. (Cinema Studio.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Bambi (1942)—None of the animals in this animated Disney feature has a gooier gaze than the little fawn, Bambi, who is still dependent on his mother. The mother-child relationship is so tender and close that when the mother is killed by hunters small children in the audience frequently scream and cry. It all ends happily when Bambi, grown to staghood, marries the virginally sweet doe Faline. The picture is a classic of sorts, if only for the uncannily awful sound of the young woodland creatures in conversation; when puberty sets in and these voices suddenly change, Walt Disney begins to seem as berserk as Busby Berkeley. Still, there's no denying that for many people some of the sequences (such as Bambi's birth) have an enduring primal power. From the Felix Salten novel. (Eastside Cinema, Guild, and Embassy. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex, and Metro Cinema; through July 28. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin; through July 28. Matinées only.)

Big—A formula fantasy film that has been directed very gently and tactfully by Penny Marshall; she sleepwalks you through the script (by Gary Ross and Anne Spielberg) about a twelve-year-old boy who wishes he were big and is magically given the body of a man in his thirties—Tom Hanks. There are neat, flaky moments, but everything has a tepid inevitability, and even as you smile you may be groaning inwardly, because "Big" is dedicated to awakening the child in all of us. Of course, the Hanks character isn't ready to function as an adult; he wants to go back. The movie wants to go back, too. It's nostalgic for childhood, for suburbia, for innocent fun. (It isn't about kids wanting to be big; it's about grownups feeling little.) In its wholesome way, "Big" is selling the slick wonders of immaturity. With the slyly sexy Elizabeth Perkins, and good comic work by Robert Loggia and Jared Rushton. Also with John Heard, David Moscow, Jon Lovitz, and Mercedes Ruehl. (6/27/88) (Gotham Cinema, Art Greenwich Twin, Embassy 72nd St., and Warner.)

Big Business—Bette Midler and Lily Tomlin, in a farce about two sets of identical twins accidently mismatched at birth. They're the Ratliffs, who live in a backwoods Southern town, and they're the Sheltons, who run the New York conglomerate Moramax. The four women and their various courtiers, flunkies, and love objects wind up spending the weekend at the Plaza Hotel. The film often looks third class, and the director, Jim Abrahams, doesn't have the knack of making the details click into place. Yet the picture moves along, spattering the air with throwaway gags, and a minute after something misfires you're laughing out loud. Fred Ward, who plays Tomlin's down-home suitor, is serenely unself-conscious, and takes over as the film's hero. Midler breezes through, kicking one gong after another. She's pure appetite. And as the mogul of Moramax she flips up her collar and her gesture bespeaks perfect self-satisfaction. (Chaplin did this sort of thing, and he didn't do it better.) With Leo Burmester as the bum. Script credited to Dori Pierson and Marc Rubel. (6/27/88) (Embassy 72nd St. . . . ¶ Cinema II, Waverly, and Embassy 1; through July 28. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin; through July 28. Evenings only.)

Boyfriends and Girlfriends ("L'Ami de Mon Amie")—The sixth, and last, in Eric Rohmer's series of "Comedies and Proverbs" is a light romantic comedy set in Cergy-Pontoise, an overdesigned and self-contained modern suburb of Paris. In this bourgeois Forest of Arden, four completely unremarkable young people—two women, two men—reshuffle their affections so that each winds up with the "right" partner in the end. It's essentially the same leisurely comedy of self-knowledge that Rohmer has been making for nearly twenty years, but this time he treats his themes with a frivolous, casual air. His characters are too young and too protected to have developed very complex responses to experience, and they live in an inglorious environment, but Rohmer finds real beauty in both the people and the setting. He takes pleasure in the cleanness and brightness of this world, in the contented buzz of shoppers and office workers and Sunday picnickers, in

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

the forthright way his characters pursue their comforts. "Boyfriends and Girlfriends" is fluff of a rarefied order, so rigorously insubstantial that it seems, finally, to be about its own weightlessness. It's artificial without being oppressive—a graceful, friendly abstraction. With Emmanuelle Chaulet, Sophie Renoir, François-Eric Gendron, and Eric Viellard. In French.—T.R. (7/25/88) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Bull Durham—Written and directed by Ron Shelton, this sunny romantic comedy has the kind of dizzying off-center literacy that Preston Sturges' pictures had. It's a satirical celebration of our native jauntiness and wit; it takes us into a subculture that's like a bawdy adjunct of childhood—minor-league baseball. Kevin Costner plays the smart, hyper-articulate catcher Crash, and comes through with his first wide-awake, star performance; at his best, he's as berserkly ironic as Jack Nicholson is at some of his peaks. After playing for twelve years, Crash arrives in Durham, North Carolina, to join the Durham Bulls and learns that he's been brought in to train baby-faced Nuke (Tim Robbins), a wild young rookie pitcher who is destined to move up. Susan Sarandon plays the beautiful, passionate Annie Savoy, a baseball fanatic who has her own scorecard: "There's never been a ballplayer slept with me who didn't have the best year of his career." What you keep reacting to is the film's exuberant doodles. (6/27/88) (Murray Hill, Loews New York Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Criterion Center; through July 28.)

Dishonored (1931)—The dullest of the Marlene Dietrich films directed by Josef von Sternberg. Dietrich plays a "woman of the streets" who is given the chance of spiritual redemption by serving her country; she becomes the glamorous spy X-27, but falls in love with an enemy agent (Victor McLaglen). McLaglen is a hopeless mistake—he's meant to be dashing, but he's a grinning buffoon, with zero sex appeal. Dietrich goes through her repertory of teases, lowering her eyelids demurely and raising them amusingly; she's charming, but she's playing all alone. Her ironic, spacey gallantry—the way she keeps her firing squad waiting while she takes out her lipstick and touches up her mouth—is the only real entertainment in this lamely directed movie; the lines are so stiffly paced that they're like failed epigrams. With Lew Cody, Gustav von Seyffertitz, Warner Oland, and Barry Norton. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 2.)

Diva (1981)—A romantic thriller from France, made by Jean-Jacques Beineix, who has a fabulous camera technique and understands the pleasures to be had from a picture that doesn't take itself too seriously. The diva is an awesomely beautiful black American soprano (Wilhelmenia Fernandez) who refuses to make recordings. Frédéric Andrei is the wide-eyed eighteen-year-old postal messenger who adores her; he sneaks his tape machine into her concert—and all hell breaks loose around him. The unfazable heroine (the fourteen-year-old Thuy An Luu) is a post-Godardian tootsie—in her short-short skirts and transparent plastic coat she's a lollipop wrapped in cellophane. In French. (Cinema Village; July 31.)

East of Eden (1955)—An amazingly high-strung, feverishly poetic movie about Cain and Abel as American brothers living on a lettuce farm in California in the years just before the First World War. Elia Kazan directed this adaptation of Steinbeck's novel, and it's like seeing a series of teasers: violent moments and charged scenes without much coherence. As the romantic, alienated young hero, James Dean is decorated with all sorts of charming gaucheries; he's sensitive, defenseless, hurting. Maybe his father (Raymond Massey) doesn't love him, but the camera does, and we're supposed to. When this Cain strikes his brother (Richard Davalos), the soundtrack amplifies the blow as if worlds were colliding. It's far from a dull movie, but it's certainly a very strange one; it's an enshrinement of the mixed-up kid. With Julie Harris, Burl Ives, Jo Van Fleet, and Albert Dekker. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 29-30.)

A Fish Called Wanda—This caper comedy promises to embody the best of two different styles of British humor; its director, the seventy-seven-year-old Charles Crichton,

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made "The Lavender Hill Mob," one of the greatest of the Ealing comedies, and its writer, executive producer, and star, the towering John Cleese, was a member of the Monty Python group and the creator of the hilarious television series "Fawlty Towers." Its main characters are a very proper London barrister (Cleese) and three jewel thieves: a crafty, sexy American woman named Wanda (Jamie Lee Curtis); another American, Otto (Kevin Kline), who's violently Anglophobic and dumb as dirt; and Ken (the ex-Pythonite Michael Palin), a deranged stutterer who's perfectly happy to bump off old ladies but becomes inconsolable at the death of a small dog or a tropical fish. The actors are fun to watch—especially the uninhibitedly theatrical Kline, whose readings are relentlessly peculiar and whose gestures are *huge* (though perhaps too meticulously choreographed). The movie has a fair number of laughs, but Crichton's direction is too drab and poky for the material. Every time "Wanda" threatens to take off into the realm of insane, head-splitting farce, as "Fawlty Towers" so often did, something seems to drag it down—some impulse toward stability and restraint, at odds with the script's spirit of manic invention.—T.R. (7/25/88) (Loews Tower East, and Loews Paramount).

Forbidden Planet (1956)—The best of the science-fiction interstellar productions of the fifties lifted its plot and atmosphere from Shakespeare: the magical island of "The Tempest" becomes the planet Altair-4. The magician Prospero becomes the mad scientist Morbius (Walter Pidgeon); Prospero's daughter Miranda, who knows no man except her father, is Altaira (Anne Francis); and the sprite Ariel becomes Robby, the friendly robot. Caliban has become a marvellously flamboyant monster out of Freud—pure id. It's a pity the film, directed by Fred Wilcox, didn't lift some of Shakespeare's dialogue: it's hard to believe you're in the heavens when the diction of the hero (Leslie Nielsen) and his spaceshipmates flattens you down to Kansas. (Film Forum 2; Aug. 1.)

Hairspray—The writer-director John Waters treats the message movie as a genre to be parodied, just like the teenpic. Combining the two, he comes up with a pop dadaist musical comedy, set in Baltimore in 1962. Waters loves narrative, and he has half a dozen plots crisscrossing each other. In the middle are the spherical Mrs. Edna Turnblad (played by the male actor Divine) and her baby-blimp daughter, Tracy (Ricki Lake); they wear matching mother-and-daughter outfits. Tracy, who's the newest teen-age dancer on "The Corny Collins Show," discovers that black kids aren't allowed to take part and she becomes a leader in the fight for integration. Meanwhile, Divine watches over Tracy and preens like a mother hen. There's a what-the-hell quality to Divine's acting which the film needs; it would be too close to a real teenpic without it. When Divine's Edna Turnblad is onscreen in the sleeveless dresses she's partial to, the movie has something like the lunacy of a W. C. Fields in drag. With Ruth Brown, Debbie Harry, Sonny Bono, Jerry Stiller, Shawn Thompson, Ric Ocasek, Pia Zadora, Jo Ann Havrilla, and Waters himself as a sicko psychiatrist. (3/7/88) (8th St. Playhouse.)

A Handful of Dust—The filmmakers who have brought Evelyn Waugh's sharp, satiric 1934 novel to the screen treat it as if it were one of the writer's ponderous later works—as if it were "Brideshead Revisited." In fact, the producer, Derek Granger, and the director, Charles Sturridge, were also responsible for the plodding TV miniseries of "Brideshead" several years ago. Waugh's novel traces the decline of Tony Last, a naïve English landowner, husband, and father who is betrayed by everything and everyone he believes in—especially by his charming, shallow wife, Brenda. Although virtually all the dialogue is lifted directly from the novel, the polished cruelty rarely sounds witty. The filmmakers give the appearance of being perfectly faithful to the novel, but they're constantly betraying it. In the last half hour, though, we're treated to a brilliant performance by Alec Guinness, as the alarming Mr. Todd. Playing Tony's final betrayer, he hits the tiny notes of menace and ruthless self-interest in the lulling tones of polite English discourse: his sly, precise effects are an actor's equivalent of Waugh's sneakily devastating prose. With James Wilby (as Tony), Kristin Scott Thomas (as Brenda), Judi Dench, Rupert Graves, and Anjelica Huston. Screenplay by Granger, Sturridge, and Tim Sullivan.—T.R. (7/11/88) (Paris.)

The Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)—A B-picture classic. This plain and inexpensive piece of science fiction employs few of the resources of the cinema (to put it mildly), but it has an idea that confirms everyone's suspicions. People are being turned into vegetables—and who can tell the difference? Kevin McCarthy and Dana Wynter, who try to cling to their animality and individuality, seem inexplicably backward to the rest of the townspeople. Some of the best lines of dialogue are voice-overs—the chatter of the dehumanized. Directed by Don Siegel. With Carolyn Jones and Larry Gates. (Film Forum 2; starting Aug. 3.)

Jour de Fête (1950)—As a director, Jacques Tati has a quick, improvisatory touch. As a comedian, buoyancy and impersonal eccentricity in the face of disaster are his special style. In this film, shot in the village of Sainte-Sévère-sur-Indre, with villagers playing many of the parts, the tall, ungainly Tati is the postman who attends the village fair and sees a documentary on the advanced, mechanized American postal system. He is overcome with enthusiasm for speed, and though he has no helicopter, he has his bicycle. He takes off, and what happens is unpredictable, even if you've already seen the movie—it's all so odd you forget it. Still, the film's melancholy humor is probably a little too mild or quaint for most American tastes. Written by Tati and Henri Marquet. It's not silent (it has sound effects and music), but it's not in French, either; Tati has devised a kind of unintelligible yet expressive gibberish. It's like the talk of robots who've got fouled up. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 3.)

The Manchurian Candidate (1962)—A daring, funny, and far-out thriller about political extremists. George Axelrod adapted the Richard Condon novel, and John Frankenheimer came to life as a director. This picture may be the most sophisticated political satire ever made in Hollywood. With Angela Lansbury, Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, and James Gregory. (Quad Cinema.)

Mr. Hulot's Holiday (1953)—People are at their most desperate when they are working at enjoying themselves; it is Jacques Tati's peculiar comic triumph to have caught the ghastliness of a summer vacation at the beach. Fortunately, his technique is light and dry slapstick; the chronicle of human foibles and frustrations never sinks to the moist or the lovable. As director, co-author, and star, Tati is sparse, eccentric, quick. In French. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 3.)

The Moon in the Gutter (1983)—Coming right

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after Jean-Jacques Beineix's sparkling, gift-wrapped "Diva" (see above), this oppressive romantic tragedy, in which Gérard Depardieu plays a stevedore obsessed with memories of his dead sister, may be a shock, but it's the kind of excruciatingly silly movie that only a talented director can make. Nastassia Kinski is the unattainable—the moon that shines on poor Depardieu down there in his Brando T-shirt in the film-noir gutter. The actors are helpless, because the movie isn't about their characters' emotions—it's about Beineix's swooning response to the earlier movie stars that they're standing in for. Beineix can sometimes engage us by his visual flourishes, but it's a suffocating, empty movie. With Victoria Abril, Bertice Reading, Dominique Pinon, and Milena Vukotić. In French. (Cinema Village; July 31.)

Morocco (1930)—Marlene Dietrich's first Hollywood film, and perhaps Josef von Sternberg's most effective piece of romantic myth-making. It's enchantingly silly, full of soulful grand passions, drifting cigarette smoke, and a few too many pictorial shots of the Foreign Legion marching this way and that. Dietrich is Amy Jolly, a mysterious woman with a past she won't talk about, who arrives in Morocco and gets a job singing in a rough café. You feel that she's a real performer here: when she comes out to sing, her energy level soars. For her first number, she appears in top hat, white tie, and tails; a Legionnaire (Gary Cooper) shushes the raucous, jeering crowd. When, in a feather boa and a short leotard that shows off her long sleek legs, she sings "What am I bid for my apples?," the Legionnaire knows just what to offer. Dietrich is at the peak of her naughty perfection—cool effrontery and a hint of amusement. This is the movie with the classically giddy, ridiculously satisfying romantic finish: she says goodbye to the rich, kind, worldly Adolphe Menjou, who loves her, kicks off her high heels, and follows Cooper and the departing Legionnaires into the desert. With Juliette Compton, Ullrich Haupt, and Eve Southern. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 2.)

Patti Rocks—David Burton Morris's low-budget drama means to tell us something new about the war between men and women, but the movie is heavy-spirited and monotonous. Billy (Chris Mulkey), a working-class husband and father who considers himself quite a stud, is appalled when one of his girlfriends, Patti Rocks (Karen Landry), gets pregnant and won't have an abortion. He drives all night, in the company of his divorced friend Eddie (John Jenkins), to visit her and persuade her to change her mind. The conversation between the two men while they're on the road is the centerpiece of the movie; it's designed to bring out their hideously sexist attitudes, which will later be challenged by Patti's quiet strength. Billy's discourse is particularly colorful; he has a prodigious array of demeaning sexual epithets, most of which have nasty, violent overtones. He really is a pig—but that's *all* he is. Once the guys get to Patti's apartment, it's clear that the movie isn't going anywhere very interesting.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

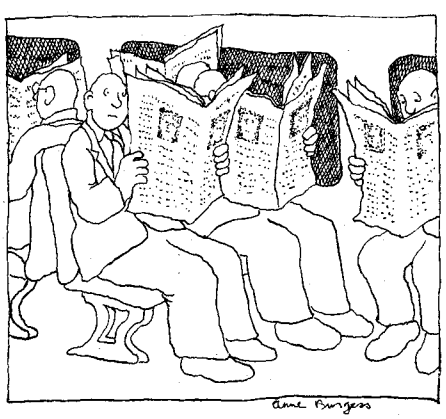
Scarface (1983)—Directed by Brian De Palma from a script by Oliver Stone, this two-hour-and-forty-nine-minute remake of the 1932 "Scarface" has the length of an epic but not the texture of an epic, and its dramatic arc is faulty. Al Pacino's Tony Montana, a Cuban who scrambles to the top of the Miami drug world, is just starting to learn the ropes and then, sated with wealth and dope, he's moldy. The middle of the movie is missing; we get the aftermaths but not the capers. The whole feeling of the movie is limp. This may be the only action picture that turns into an allegory of impotence. With F. Murray Abraham, Steven Bauer, Robert Loggia, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio. (Cinema Village; starting Aug. 3.)

Tampopo (1986)—Written and directed by Juzo Itami, this understated farce has its own brand of dippy enchantment. It's about noodles, pleasure, and the movies. The title, which is Japanese for "dandelion," is the name of a fortyish widow (Nobuko Miyamoto) who is trying to make a go of a run-down noodle shop on the outskirts of Tokyo. A courtly truck driver (Tsutomu Yamazaki), who wears a dark-brown cowboy hat straight across his brow, like the righteous hero of a solemn Western, makes it his mission to help her become a real noodle cook. The film cross-cuts between the story of Tampopo and her cowboy samurai and the culinary-erotic adventures of a pair of lovers: a gangster in a white suit and his ready-for-everything cutie. These two demonstrate that eating and sex can be the same thing. The movie is constructed like a comic essay, with random frivolous touches, and much of it is shot in hot, bright color that suggests a neon fusion of urban night life and movie madness. The subtexts connect with viewers' funnybones at different times, and part of the fun of the movie is listening to the sudden eruptions of giggles—it's as if some kids were running around in the theatre tickling people. In Japanese. (6/1/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema; through July 28.)

A Taxing Woman—The third film written and directed by Juzo Itami is his first dull one. It's a comedy about tax evasion, pitting a dishonest and very clever businessman (Tsutomu Yamazaki) against the awesome forces of Japan's national tax office, whose relentless spirit is most purely incarnated in a tiny, dogged female inspector named Mrs. Itakura (Nobuko Miyamoto). This sounds like fun, but, despite some clever notions and a handful of inventive scenes, the movie feels tentative, not fully worked out; it's as if Itami got bogged down in research and forgot about the jokes. For whatever reason, "A Taxing Woman" is much more conventional than the director's previous films, "The Funeral" and "Tampopo" (see above). In Japanese.—T.R. (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

To Have and Have Not (1944)—In this picture, Humphrey Bogart, the greatest cynical hero of them all, found himself in Martinique, where a beautiful big cat of a girl named Lauren Bacall slouched across the screen for the first time and managed to make the question "Anybody got a match?" sound like the most insolent and insinuating of demands. Howard Hawks directed this slickly professional, thoroughly enjoyable Second World War melodrama, which was taken from what Warner Brothers advertised as Ernest Hemingway's novel, with William Faulkner listed as co-author of the screenplay—making this the only movie on record with two Nobel Prize-winning authors. Don't be misled: it's the Warners mixture as before—sex and politics—but better this time. Hoagy Carmichael provides the music and accompaniment for Bacall's facial exercises; the singing voice is that of Andy Williams, and it never sounded sexier than when coming out of her. With Walter Brennan, Dolores Moran, Sheldon Leonard, Marcel Dalio, and Dan Seymour (literally the heavy). (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 31.)

White Mischief—At first, Michael Radford's film about upper-class English settlers in Kenya in the nineteen-forties seems bracingly sardonic: there isn't a hint of the sneaky romanticism and nostalgia for Empire that colonial dramas so frequently succumb to. As one aristocratic viper after another is introduced, and each member of the large and familiar cast (Greta Scacchi, Charles Dance, Joss Ackland, Sarah Miles, John Hurt, Trevor Howard, Geraldine Chaplin) makes his distinctively peculiar entrance, the movie promises to be wicked fun. Amazingly, though, as the action gets nastier the picture gets duller. The screenplay, by Radford and Jonathan Gems, is based on the real-life murder of Josslyn Hay, Earl of Errol (Dance), a colonial Casanova who conducted a flagrant affair with young Lady Diana Broughton (Scacchi), to which their jaded social set reacted with a mixture of amusement and jealousy. As the movie concentrates more and more on the unsavory triangle of Errol, Diana, and her creepy middle-aged husband (Ackland), we begin to get the uneasy feeling that the director has lost track of his own intentions. For all the melodramatic complications, the characters remain static, as if they'd been frozen in place after their initial scenes.—T.R. (Carnegie Hall Cinema. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; through July 28. . . . ¶ Thalia SoHo; July 29-30.)



Who Framed Roger Rabbit—This manic comedy, in which animated cartoon characters interact with live actors, is an amazing feat of entertainment engineering—like a Disneyland ride or a World's Fair movie. The setting is Los Angeles in 1947, and the screenplay, by Jeffrey Price and Peter Seaman, takes off from the fairly witty conceit that the cartoon characters, called Toons here, are ordinary contract players in the already skewed universe of the Hollywood studio system. These strange creatures become involved in a conventional forties mystery plot, featuring a seedy, hard-drinking private eye (Bob Hoskins). The director, Robert Zemeckis, and his small army of animators and special-effects artists mean to pay homage to the Hollywood animation of the thirties and forties, but the movie doesn't have the right spirit. Technology and plot mechanics labor mightily to evoke an aura of freedom and uninhibited joy—yet there's hardly a spontaneous moment in the film. Also with Christopher Lloyd, Joanna Cassidy, and Stubby Kaye. The funniest Toon, Roger's sireny wife, Jessica, speaks with Kathleen Turner's (uncredited) voice and sings with Amy Irving's. The director of animation was Richard Williams. Adapted, very loosely, from the novel "Who Censored Roger Rabbit?," by Gary K. Wolf.—T.R. (7/11/88) (Gramercy, Coronet, Ziegfeld, and Columbia Cinema.)

Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, has a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child" stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Cinema Studio.)

A World Apart—Set in 1963, it's about a thirteen-year-old girl (Jodhi May) who lives a well-ordered, ruling-class life in a fine home in suburban Johannesburg until her father (Jeroen Krabbé), who's a Communist, flees the country in the middle of the night to escape arrest, and her mother (Barbara Hershey), the editor of a small anti-apartheid newspaper, is "detained" for ninety days, and then another ninety days. Based on a semi-autobiographical script by Shawn Slovo, the daughter of the journalist Ruth First and Joe Slovo, the leader of the banned South African Communist Party, the movie deals with the girl's feeling confused and resentful—the fight against apartheid is also her competitor. In prison or out, her mother is not all there for her. The theme of the movie is the conflict between fighting injustice and what we owe to our families—or, more poignantly, a young girl's pain at the loss of her mother and father, though she knows the reason for it. Shot in Zimbabwe, this remarkable first feature directed by the noted cinematographer Chris Menges has a visual snap to it. It's luminous yet very informal. And though, toward the end, it falls into chanting slogans, it has a radiant intelligence. The cast includes Linda Mvusi, who shared the best-actress award at Cannes with May and Hershey, and Tim Roth, Yvonne Bryceland, Albee Lesotho, David Suchet, and Nadine Chalmers. (6/13/88) (Quad Cinema, and Festival.)

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

THE seventieth birthday of Nelson Mandela, the black South African leader who has been in prison for almost twenty-six years, was commemorated in at least thirty countries last week. In London, tens of thousands gathered in Hyde Park for a political rally, at which South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu declared, "Any sensible government would realize that Nelson Mandela is absolutely essential for peace and stability in southern Africa." A British anti-apartheid group delivered twenty-five boxes containing thirty thousand postcards to the South African Embassy, in Trafalgar Square; its guards refused to accept them. In Paris, the South African writer Breyten Breytenbach addressed a gathering in front of Notre-Dame Cathedral, and afterward the crowd blew out the seventy candles on a gigantic birthday cake. Similar demonstrations were held in the Netherlands, West Germany, Japan, India, Cuba, Nigeria, and Venezuela. Dozens of world leaders, including Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan, called for Mandela's release from prison. The Prime Ministers of Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland said in a joint statement, "There must be a dawning of sanity in Pretoria if the worst is not to happen."

At the band shell in Central Park, several thousand New Yorkers gathered on a sizzling afternoon and evening for a five-hour rally that included performances by the cast of "Sarafina!" and a variety of other African musicians and dancers. The most moving moment, to our mind, came when Dennis Goldberg, a white South African dissident who was convicted on sabotage charges at the same time as Mandela and was imprisoned for twenty-two years, described the prevailing situation in his country. He called for the release not only of Mandela but of the "Sharpeville Six"—a group of blacks who have been sentenced to die for allegedly taking part in the lynching of a local official—and more than fifty other prisoners now on death row. He spoke of the plight of the thousands who, under the country's detention laws, are being held without trial, and he recalled that there were roughly three hangings a week during his years in prison, or a hundred and fifty a year. "On the night before a hanging, the prisoners would sing hymns all night," he told the crowd. "The whole place would be jumping, as if they were all trying to ease the pain."

In South Africa, the government banned all outdoor events that had been scheduled to mark the occasion. It set up roadblocks around Pollsmoor Prison, outside Cape Town, where Mandela is held, and patrolled the black townships. It cancelled a soccer game and a rugby match that were to have been held on July 16th, two days before Mandela's birthday, and arrested several young runners wearing T-shirts marked "MANDELA, FREEDOM AT 70" who were taking part in a fifteen-mile race. It also called off a charity concert near Soweto—an action that Helen Suzman, the widely respected anti-apartheid Member of Parliament, denounced as "silly, vindictive, and spiteful."

The government had invited Winnie Mandela, Nelson's wife, and ten other relatives to pay him a six-hour visit last week, which would have been by far the longest period that the Mandela family had been together since 1962, when Nelson went to prison. (For fifteen years, he and his wife were separated during visits by a glass panel, but since 1984 they have been allowed "contact" visits; that is, they can meet in the same room, with a prison official present.) According to the *Times*, Mrs. Mandela had said that she was looking forward to the visit, because it would give the family a sense of "a certain normality." She went on, "But then after six hours they will come as usual and say, 'Time is over.' Then we go and he stays behind. It is terrible." In the end, the Mandelas decided to reject the government's invitation, because, according to Mrs. Mandela's lawyer, "they have never sought any special privileges for themselves." At a news conference in Johannesburg, Mrs. Mandela, standing in front of a mountain of birthday letters from foreign supporters, said that her husband was "in perfect health," though he had remained isolated in the Pollsmoor hospital ward since undergoing prostate surgery two years ago, and must still

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ask permission to see other inmates. "We have no explanation whatsoever why he is kept alone," she said.

To a remarkable degree, Winnie Mandela is her husband's link with the world, and vice versa. Most South Africans have never seen him, have never heard him speak, and don't know what he looks like today. Under South Africa's extraordinary laws, it is forbidden to quote his words or publish pictures of him. What is known is that he has endured his long imprisonment well, and that he remains, indisputably, the most important of the country's black political leaders—conceivably the only one who could unite the black majority.

Occasionally, he has been interviewed, with government permission. Lord Bethell, a British peer, saw him in 1985 and described him as a "lean figure with silvering hair." Mandela told Lord Bethell that he gets up at three-thirty every morning, exercises strenuously for two hours (in his youth he was an amateur heavyweight boxer), and reads and studies throughout the rest of the day. After visiting Mandela two years ago, the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group noted in its report, "He exuded authority and received the respect of all around him, including his jailers." According to the report, Mandela emphasized to his visitors "his desire for reconciliation across the divide of color."

In January, 1985, South Africa's President P. W. Botha offered to release Mandela if he would renounce the use of violence. Mandela refused, in a message that one of his daughters delivered at a rally in Soweto: "I cannot and will not give any undertaking at a time when I, and you, the people, are not free. Your freedom and mine cannot be separated." Last week, an Afrikaans-language, pro-government newspaper, *Beeld*, joined the call for Mandela's release, asking in an editorial, "Do we really want to let it be imprinted in our history that we let an old man die in jail while there was the opportunity to negotiate with him on the aspirations of his people?" On state television, the Information Minister, Stoffel van der Merwe, replied mildly, "One must remember that an editor does not have the intimate knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the issue that the government has." In other words, the government is uneasy about Mandela's capacity for martyrdom but is even more fearful of his political power.

So Mandela stays on at Pollsmoor. Every year, according to the *Times*, he may receive thirty visits of forty minutes apiece. He may write fifty-two letters a year and receive the same number of letters. He may receive twelve birthday cards and twelve Christmas cards. He may read newspapers, listen to the radio, and watch television and perhaps, on occasion, a video recorder. The Italian government is reported to have arranged last week for Mandela to borrow a copy of the Bernardo Bertolucci film "The Last Emperor," which he had said he wanted to see. It's a film about a man who, in a different time and in a different world, spends much of his life in a succession of prisons, exiled from power.

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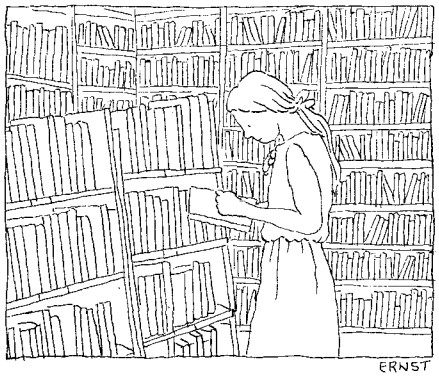
WE flew down to Atlanta to watch the Democrats' opening night and almost missed the big show, thanks to a blue pass marked "Podium" that hung around our neck and got us too far behind the scenes. The Convention was squeezed into a basketball arena called the Omni Coliseum, and we should have sat down at mid-court, behind the Guam delegation, in their green coconut-palm hats, and enjoyed every minute of the keynote speech by Ann Richards, the state treasurer of Texas. But the "Podium" pass entitled us to go through the security lines, so we did—down a gray cinder-block hallway, past Makeup and Teleprompter Control, to a lounge beneath the podium, and sat there and watched Ms. Richards on TV awhile. Privilege comes at a high price sometimes.



When Ms. Richards lit into George Bush in her flat Texas twang, we tore ourself loose from the screen and climbed the stairs to the curtain behind the podium, about twenty feet from her, and we could feel the heat. She was out there cooking. She had a hot crowd and a good piece of material, and she was playing it big and letting the crowd go wild. She got to the line "Poor George. He can't help it. He was born with a silver foot in his mouth," and the roar of the crowd came in like breakers on the shore. You could hear the wave rise as she unreeled her line, and then it crashed on her and drenched her, and as it receded she paddled straight ahead. It was classic Democratic oratory: us plain good folk of simple tastes and no pretensions, honest, hardworking, exploited by the fat, smug factory owner and the sleazy sheriff on his payroll, but united we shall triumph. We edged out through the curtain onto the podium, off to one side, among a knot of staff people scanning the crowd. The speaker, awash in a pool of light, stood facing a grandstand of TV and press cameras—we counted thirty-five lenses aimed at her—and high above the red, white, and blue seats full of Democrats, with their red "JESSE!" signs and their blue "DUKAKIS" signs, were the TV booths, like a ring of luxury condos, with pale-blue decor and big picture windows: NBC and CNN to the left and CBS and ABC to the right, in duplexes; and, in smaller quarters, Cox, Fox, Gannett, Group W, INN, NBC Skycom, and the Times Mirror people.

"I'm a grandmother now. I have one nearly perfect granddaughter named Lily," said Ms. Richards. "And when I hold that grandbaby I feel the continuity of life that unites us." We thought, What a great finish, and then felt a little dry heat in our eyes, then a tear in the corner. At the end, the crowd stood up and threw all the noise at her that it could make. The question on everyone's mind at a party convention is "Am I at the winners' convention or the losers'?" but a passionate, stem-winding speech is a piece of art that lifts you up from such small, circular thoughts. Everywhere we went in Atlanta, people talked

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about what a great speech she gave. The next morning, we got on a plane and came home. The *Times* dismissed the speech as "a made-for-television keynote speech at a made-for-television convention," and we heard that Dukakis was down in the polls. That night, leaning in toward the screen and watching Jesse Jackson's speech, hearing the tinny sounds of the hall erupting, we could almost imagine how it was and feel the real heat of the moment; and at the end, when he said "Keep hope alive" over and over, we jumped up, elated, and flipped off the set.

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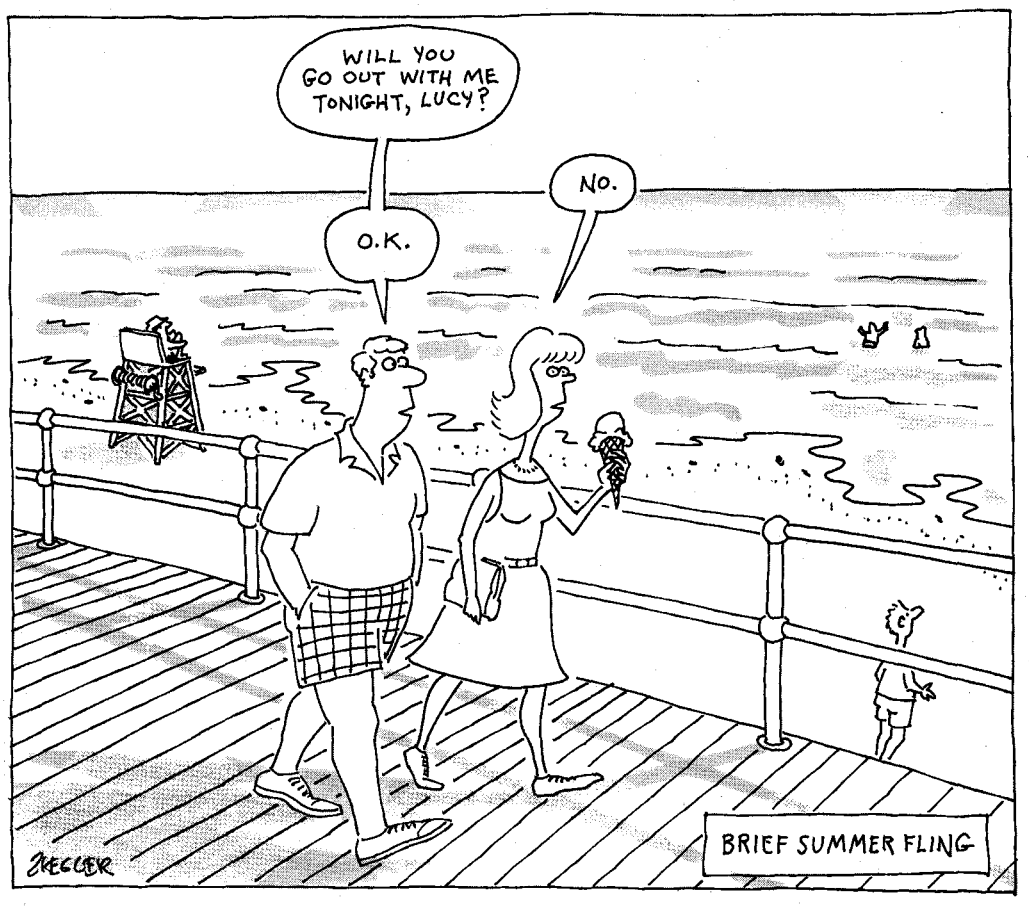

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Dayliner

A YOUNG woman writes:

There were no souvenirs for sale on the Dayliner. A refreshment stand was open, but most of the twenty-two hundred people who boarded the ship, at Twelfth Avenue and Forty-first Street, for one of only four runs up the Hudson this summer, brought their own food. There were families wheeling grocery carts up the gangplank. Teenagers boarded with coolers and boom boxes, and black women set out cartons of doughnuts on card tables lined up in long rows, as at a church social. There were enormous Korean families, with their chairs arranged in big circles; German tourists wearing visors and running shoes and carrying binoculars; and a lone Russian, stripped to hat and shorts, sitting at a table for four in the stern, reading the *Новое Русское Слово* (a sort of Russian *Daily News*).

I always try to make friends with the captain when I go anywhere on a ship, because he has the best view, but first I befriended Yury, the Russian. Like most of the other passengers, he was going to get off at Bear Mountain, but, unlike the others, he was planning not to swim or hike or picnic but to search for a nice family of big brown ants and then lie down on them and induce them to bite his back. He believed that their bites would cure his back pain. I floated up the Hudson listening to Yury's woes (he thinks Marxism has its roots in Judaism, and this theory had got him kicked out of the Soviet Union) and trying to interest him in the underside first of the George Washington Bridge and then of the Tappan Zee Bridge. I had plenty of time. I was on my way to visit friends in Poughkeepsie, like someone out of an Edith Wharton novel, except that I eschew period costume and no Wharton character would ever have had the presence of mind, after sweating out the long line at the refreshment stand, to buy two beers while she was at it, or the necessary poise, upon offering one to a new Russian friend and being rebuffed, to drink them both. Also, the Dayliner doesn't stop at Poughkeepsie anymore; it just turns around there.

With three long and two short blasts on its whistle, the ship pulled up at West Point. A line of tour buses stood ready to take people off to view the citadel. Even the Pepsi machines on the pier seemed to be standing at attention. I had arranged for my friends in Poughkeepsie to pick me up when the Dayliner came back down to the Point, so I stayed on board, with a few other river lovers, and eventually made my way up to the bridge. The wheelhouse was painted the green of certain tenement hallways in Manhattan, and had a rack on the ceiling for storing rolled charts. I met Captain Gene McDonald and Lorne Grant, his pilot, and some hangers-on—"the historical society," as Captain McDonald called them: Frank Wilson, a retired seaman, and his daughter Irene; Captain Joseph A. O'Brien, a longtime Hudson pilot; and Harold Brusie, a retired Dayliner deckhand. They will all be on the ship as often as possible this summer, because, I found out, the Dayliner's August 6th and September 5th trips up the Hudson may be her last. The Day Line, Inc., plans to refurbish the ship and charter her for luxury dinner cruises.

The people on the bridge rehearsed

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the fates of old Day Line steamships. There was the Alexander Hamilton, a side-wheeler: "She had nice lines. She was tied up down in Leonardo, New Jersey, and in 1978 she ran aground, and a hurricane took the house off her." The Washington Irving: "She got hit by an oil barge in the fog one morning in 1926 and settled right above where they were building the Holland Tunnel. They had to raise her. They were afraid the tunnel would collapse." The Robert Fulton: "It took only fifty-seven days to build her. The New York had burnt up back in 1908, and they took the engine out and put it in the Robert Fulton. She held three thousand eight hundred and sixty-one passengers." The Mary Powell: "She was Queen of the Hudson. There was no boat faster than her. She could make two round trips between Kingston and New York in *daylight*." The Peter Stuyvesant: "She flipped over in Boston in 1977. A blizzard came, and she went over on her side. They had to demolish her. She'd been a restaurant in Boston Harbor."

The crew bragged about the Dayliner—"She's three hundred and eight feet long and sixty-six feet abeam, has four decks, and holds thirty-two hundred and fifty passengers," Captain McDonald said—and they bragged about each other. Frank Wilson said of Joseph O'Brien, "He never had an accident." Joseph O'Brien said of Frank Wilson, "He was a fireman on the Newburgh ferry. He survived the switch from steam to diesel. After the Second World War, there was no more coal. Coal is dirty. And then you got ashes. There used to be four fireboxes that you threw coal in. There were three smokestacks, and smoke coming out of every one of them. That was boating." And they bragged about the river. "It's a beautiful river," said Irene, whose father has been taking her out on the Hudson since she was a kid. "There's no river like it in the United States."

"We're not going to make it all the way up to Poughkeepsie today," Captain McDonald said when we were within sight of the bridge there. "We're late." Reluctantly, Lorne Grant swung the ship around, counterclockwise, and headed back to West Point. On the way down the river, bucking the tide, the Captain pointed out the sights: the Danskammer power house, the Chelsea pumping station, the Kedem Royal Winery, Mount Beacon, and Hasbrouck House (George Washington slept there). Just opposite West Point, Irene pointed out a castle way up on a hill in Garrison. "I heard they used that when they filmed 'The Wizard of Oz,' " she said. "For the witch's castle."

Before getting off, I asked Frank and Irene what kind of souvenirs the Dayliner used to have.

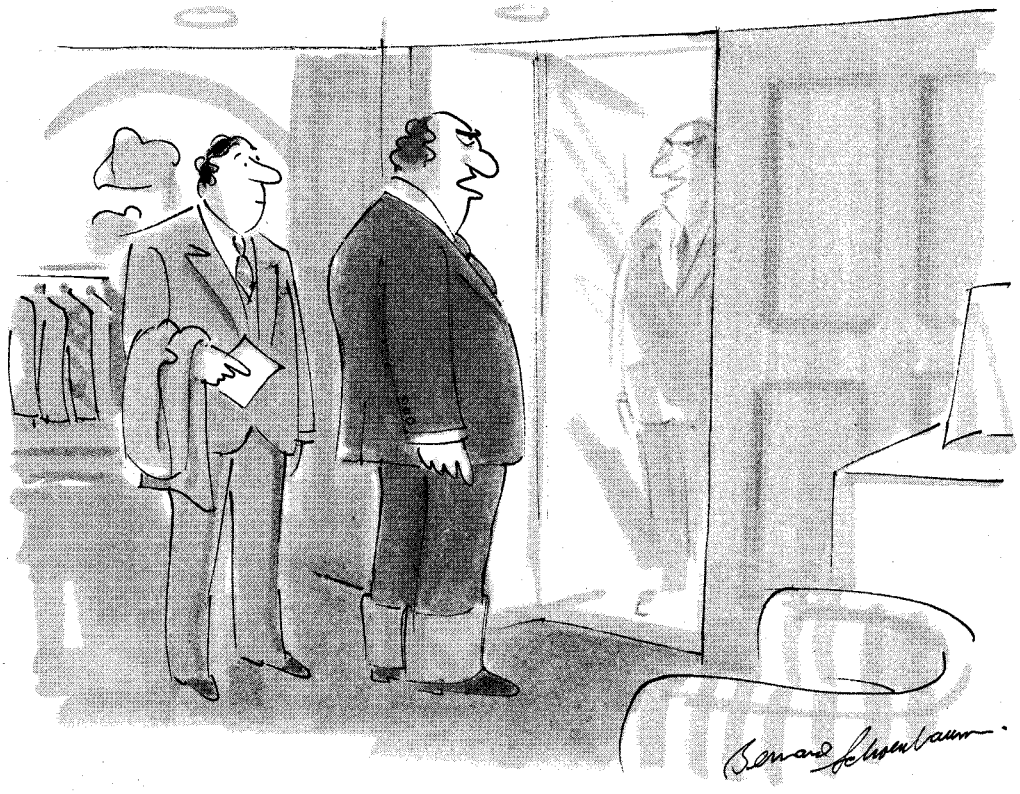
"Pens you tip and the Dayliner goes up and down," said Frank. "Visors. Ashtrays."

"Combs that came in a case with a red apple on one side and a mirror on the other," said Irene.

"Little boats."

"Pennants."

All these things sounded infinitely desirable to me.



"The fit's O.K., but does it say 'Not guilty'?"

Gold Bar

YOU don't need to have one too many to feel discombobulated in the Gold Bar. Hidden behind the façade of an old liquor store on East Ninth Street, the Gold Bar is a small, dark room with an unpainted concrete ceiling, walls that are askew, a tilted steel-plate floor, and a gold-leafed bar that comes out of a fifteen-foot-long hole in the floor and slants both outward and down toward the street. The bathroom doors are made of raw steel that is developing rust spots. There are no wall decorations.

On a Saturday night recently, we went down to the Gold Bar and met Thomas Leeser, its architect and co-owner. Mr. Leeser is tall and easygoing, with swept-back blond hair, and he was wearing a black double-breasted suit. He told us that he is the son of an architect, and that he was raised in Frankfurt and came to New York in 1980. He's now a senior associate in the firm of Eisenman Architects.

We asked Mr. Leeser to tell us something about the Gold Bar.

"It's a weird place," he said, in a soft, gently accented voice. "Actually, the Gold Bar is probably the most uncomfortable place in New York. And the most scary place. And the most unsettling place. Once, somebody walked in and after a while he just got sick. Not from too much alcohol—I think he just got dizzy. He

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"Someday, son, all this will belong to your wife!"

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was sitting there, and the floor was tilted, and he just got this vertigo effect."

We asked why people come to such a place.

"I don't know," Mr. Leeser said, with a laugh. "I mean, why do people go to discothèques, which are *really* uncomfortable? Maybe people like that dissonance. Basically, New York is not a comfortable place, and New Yorkers are people who like the challenge of being uncomfortable. The work I'm doing always has to do with this aspect of being uncomfortable—with questioning people's expectations and behavior. You know the term 'pushing the envelope'? That's what I try to do."

We discovered that you can't belly up to the bar at the Gold Bar, because of a steel railing that protects customers from falling through the floor. "Usually, the bar is the thing you hold on to—the thing you're most comfortable with," Mr. Leeser explained. "Here it's the thing that is most alienating. The architecture keeps you away from certain things, and being kept away causes a moment of frustration and disturbance. That moment is also contaminated with a certain aggressiveness and a certain questioning of your desires."

We noticed that the bar stools were all of different heights. "All the furniture—I would like to throw it out immediately," Mr. Leeser said, glowering at a table and some folding chairs by a window. "The Gold Bar was designed as a place where people couldn't sit down, because I didn't want them to be comfortable. But people complained. The bar stools are five-minute designs I drew on a napkin. This welder cut up scrap and made them cheaply. I wanted to make it clear that the stools don't really belong here. I like ambiguity—a thing has one reading, but it also has another. Out of this fluctuation can grow, maybe, a new meaning."

"Why is it called the Gold Bar?" we asked.

"The idea was this gold *thing* emerging out of the roughness of the East Village—the clashing of two totally different elements," Mr. Leeser said. "When I moved to New York, the East Village was really a dump. It was too dangerous to walk around First Avenue. Now you see Rolls-Royces in front of the clubs and galleries on Avenue A. In a way, the bar is an analogue of New York. The Japanese were the first to understand it. The Europeans like it because it's in New York and they expect something weird. And Americans don't know what to think. They took longer to accept it—especially people from the neighborhood."

We ordered a beer, and Mr. Leeser had a gin-and-tonic. We noticed that all drinks—from Martinis to Cokes—are served in a generic glass, much like that used for orange juice at a greasy spoon. "I didn't really want to deal with glasses," Mr. Leeser confided to us. "I tried to abstract all that stuff. I would hate this place to have very expressive glasses and a beautiful mirror, and all the strictly cliché bar elements. I mean, I didn't want it to be a *bar*—that was the last thing I was interested in." Mr. Leeser waved a hand. "Maybe it's architecture. Maybe it's a fairy tale. I don't care whether they start selling sausages tomorrow or baking bread in this place. It doesn't matter."

Mr. Leeser told us that he had been labelled a Deconstructivist architect but that the term was inaccurate. "I can't even tell you what Deconstructivism is," he said. "Deconstructivism is made by the media. People call us Deconstructivist architects because we never design in the traditional sense. We don't design for symmetry and proportion and, you know, all that kind of stuff, but not everything that is crooked is Deconstructivist. Our work is always theoretical. I like to disturb, to challenge." Mr. Leeser paused, and then said he was greatly amused recently when the magazine *Taxi* ran a photograph of the Gold Bar which was cropped at an angle that seemed to reduce the bar's slope. "It shows a subconscious desire to straighten things out," he said. "Here they have this big article about Deconstructivism. Then they manipulate the photograph to make this thing look like it's straight. I was very happy to see that, because it showed me how people subconsciously get this uneasy feeling. They can't let it happen. They'd rather have the photograph crooked than the architecture."

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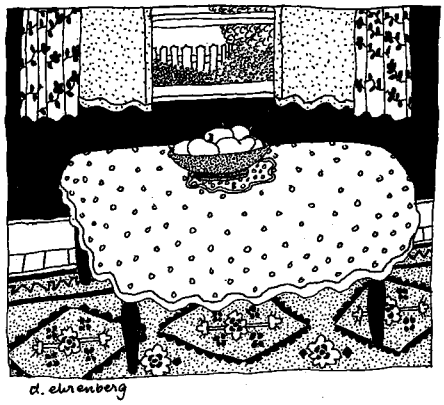
COCKY OLLY

At the end of term I often give a lift to two or three of my students who are going back to London. They talk; I listen. Halfway, about forty miles from the city, where the motorway rises and slices through the Downs, cutting one off from the towns that are merely names on the road signs, I interrupt their chatter to point out one or two prehistoric barrows. The youngsters listen politely. When we pass a sign, "NEXT EXIT FORDHAMPTON," where a winding side road drops itself into the wooded country, I have the impulse to say that down there is a turning to Clapton St. Luke, Fogham, and the Marshes—one of the paradises of my childhood—but I check it. And farther on we pass Newford, where I was at school when I was a girl, forty years ago. One of these days, when there is no one with me, I plan to go and look at these places, but I never do. The main road whips it all away.

I hear Newford is larger now; people commute from there to London. Only a few used to take a train from Fordhampton, with its main street running down the hill to the small river, where we would lean from the bridge hoping to see the private trout in the pool where rich Londoners, one of them a Cabinet Minister, used to fish at weekends. On Monday mornings when I was waiting at our station for the train to take me to school, the Cabinet Minister would be dressed in bowler hat, black coat, and striped trousers, and carrying his official case. Unlike the rest of the passengers, he would be trotting up to the end of the platform and back, often fifteen times: I counted. If my father drove me to the station he would give his big laugh and say loudly for anyone to hear, "Bloody politician. Up to no good." I was a weekly boarder at the school in Newford, and at first my mother drove me all the way and then would pick me up on Saturday mornings and drive me home to Upper Marsh, a different country, almost an island between the Downs, where the village people had a more drawling way of talking than the people in the towns. I had picked up the habit before my school days, from the children I played with on the farm near our house.

Marsh Hole really was like a deep hole, where four lanes met at a big farm. Our house was a mile up the road to Upper Marsh, a red mock-Tudor villa that I used to boast was Elizabethan. It was built between the wars. I also thought it was immense, but it was small. It looked out onto a large field of kale. At the back of our house (which my school friend Augusta called "the eyesore") lay a two-mile stretch of water meadow that went to the foot of the bald Downs themselves. Rarely did one see anyone walking across it and not often any cattle grazing, either. The endless pampas (as I used to call it —one of my favorite words) was alive with insects in the spring and summer, and, from my bedroom, I used to feel I had only to stretch my finger to touch the prehistoric barrow at the top of the far-off hill and the curious chalk track that went in a zigzag scratch almost to the top. The water meadow began at a hedge at the bottom of our steep garden. I remember when I was thirteen gazing at it and feeling it all belonged to our family. This was because the people at Lower Marsh, half a mile farther down our lane, had exactly the same view, although we could not see their house even in the winter. A mound or tongue of coppice kept us from the sight of our nearest neighbors. Lower Marsh had a short avenue of elms leading to a farm where I used to play with the village boys. Lower Marsh House itself was large and gray, with big windows. The village boys said it was haunted. A strange tall man with a long black beard sometimes came out of it, and once I saw him in the road piddling into the hedge near our house. Another time, a funeral hearse went by and after that the black-



bearded man did not appear again. But my mother told me I could not have seen all this, because I wasn't even born. Yet it is very vivid to me, and now I think I must have heard my parents talking of some such event much later.

But I know for a fact that years later Lower Marsh House was occupied by Major Short and his wife and a young boy, because I saw them hitting a shuttlecock in the air once or twice as we drove past. Often at weekends if we were walking by we could see two or three cars parked in the avenue of elms.

"Guests!" my mother would say.

"Weekend riffraff," my father said. "Gang of traitors. Pacifists, long-haired pansies, atheists, bathing stark naked in that swimming pool. Friends of Hitler and Stalin. Calls himself a major."

"Well, he was," my mother would say.

"First World War," said my father, who was a brigadier.

"But, Buzzer," my mother said—Buzzer was my father's Army nickname: they used to say he buzzed like a wasp—"didn't Major Short do rather well in that war, got a medal and was badly wounded?"

"Got himself blown up, some fool dug him out."

I always thought of the Major as a kind of fair-haired elephant, with a huge chest, lying under tons of French mud. My father had also been wounded. His left arm creaked and he wore a black glove on his artificial hand. He was a slight man with red hair and scalded patches on his face and a high, sandy kind of voice with grit in it, and when he talked of the Major he would get into a temper. Then he'd laugh in the middle of it, and more than once he added, "Sends his boy to a god-awful boarding school in Dorset run by pansies and refugees wearing sandals, where the boys live in trees. Girls, too. No wonder the little bastard runs away."

"Surely not in trees, Buzzer," my mother would say in her high thrilled happy voice. I think that my mother and father were thrilled by each other.

"Ruined by that nanny they had, too," Father went on. "Not a lad I'd care to have in my command."

These outbursts cheered my father. He was often up and down to the War Office in London or away fishing. At

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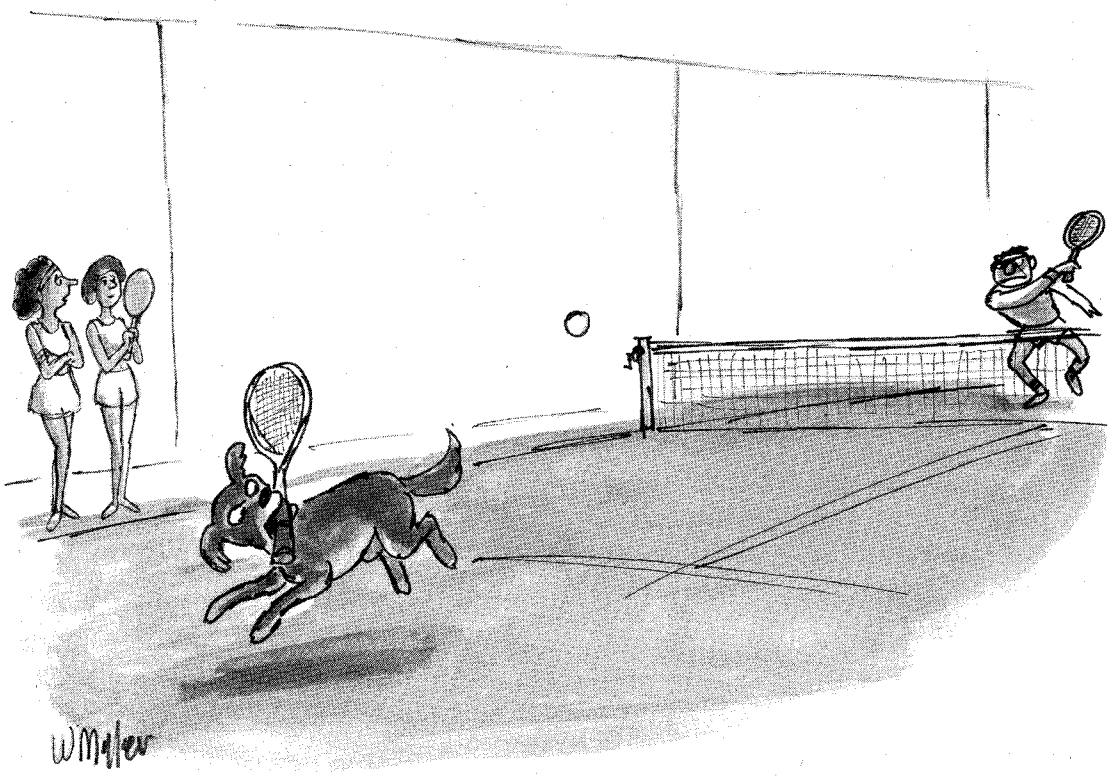
home he would either be ordering Mother's plants about in the garden or sitting for hours playing patience with his one hand. "Crash, crash, tinkle, tinkle, tinkle," he would call out as he put a winning deal down. He was thinking of glass flying about in French villages when shells burst during that war.

Another thing that annoyed my father was that the Shorts did not go to church. We were forbidden to know them. Mother said it was nothing to do with that old war. The real trouble was that our land almost joined theirs and that the Major had cut down several fir trees at the edge of it. My father, Mother said in her heavenly voice, liked cover.



"It's kind of a shame, really. Before tennis they used to be the best of friends."

• •

As for myself, I often thought about "the little bastard" Benedict, who not only lived in trees but was a "runaway" as well: that worried Mother, too. In spite of the quarrel between the two men, I believed Mother and Mrs. Short sometimes met in Newford. They belonged to a musical group, a quartet. More than once I saw the boy shopping with his father and mother in Fordhampton, jumping up and down with excitement as he called to them to look at the posters of a gangster film at the cinema and talking with a spluttering lisp. He had black hair like his mother's and her same sunburned toasted skin—because he lived in trees, perhaps—and he was handsome in his mother's way. I used to wonder if he had run away that very day. He was two years younger than I.

At fourteen, I was a studious girl. I longed to be a monitor at my school and I thought, as my father did, that Benedict was spoiled and that he ought to be "taken in hand." Often when I was out in our garden and looking at the Downs rising straight out of the marsh I was fascinated by the chalky track rising to the top and I would think of Benedict "running" forty miles, at least, across country, and coming down that track as he came at last in sight of his home. I soon found out that in fact he did not run far. He had the nerve to telephone his father once he had escaped from that school of his and his father drove out at night, to pick him up outside some pub on the road. I was awed by his crime.

This and the thought of all those guests "bathing naked" in the "traitors' " house at Lower Marsh gripped me. In the holidays I would sometimes get through the hedge at the bottom of our garden and follow the rough ground until their house came into view and I would see the lawn of the Shorts' garden and keep an eye open for a sight of the runaway. Once, I thought I saw him with his mother walking across the water meadow picking wildflowers. Another time, he was coming in our direction and then drifted away. I used to think if he came near our garden I would shout out to him, "What are you doing here? This is private property!" At last I decided to be illegal myself one weekend and to climb through our hedge and then walk cautiously all along the meadow till I could get a full view of the Shorts and their friends. Getting through the hedge always excited me. The air seemed freer on the other side, the smells different. I did this many times just for something to do, and at first went no nearer. I always took an apple with me, throwing it up and down as I walked, for I thought this would make the Shorts think I was passing by accident. Sometimes there was no one there, sometimes only Mrs. Short digging in her garden. If it was a weekend there would be several men and women sitting in basket chairs on the long veranda or on the lawn. The lawn looked rough, but sometimes they played a mixture of bowls and croquet. In time I got bolder, passing within twenty yards of their garden. No sign of naked atheists or a swimming pool and only once a sight of Benedict, running from player to player. I heard the Major booming at him.

I gave up bothering about the Shorts. One hot and heavy afternoon at the end of that summer when the clouds hardly moved and the water meadow was as still as a photograph I got through our hedge again and walked across the water meadow, soon eating my apple, because I was thirsty. I looked at the St.-John's-wort, a yel-

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low flower that swarmed with disgusting caterpillars. The insects were biting and I kept brushing off the flies that were swirling round my head. I remember the swallows and crows were flying low. I was making for the wood at the bottom of the Downs and when I got there the wood pigeons had stopped cooing. Even the flies had gone. The wood had that cankered, damp smell—the smell of toadstools. It came into my head to see if there were any Red Blushers, which excited me, because there might be also what my fungus book called Poisonous or False Red Blushers—not that I would touch them but I liked to give myself a fright by staring at poisonous things and congratulating myself on knowing the difference. I didn't go too deeply into the wood but just shuffled through the dead leaves. The wood was darker, and presently I felt a big warm spit of rain on my face. Suddenly a shot went off, and I nearly jumped out of my skin and the silent wood pigeons came clattering out of the trees and went circling over the marsh. Then there was a long silence. I hurried out of the wood, and crackling sticks seemed to be coming after me. Suddenly the runaway came running out, carrying a gun. There were tears on his white face as he rushed at me.

"Quick! Quick!" he screeched. "I've shot a bird. It's streaming with blood. It's frightful. It's still alive. It's flapping about." And he grabbed hold of my arm.

I brushed back my hair. I heard myself saying in my father's voice, "Stop waving that gun about. You can't leave a wounded bird." I shook off his arm. "Show me where it is," I said.

"Up here! Up here!" he shouted out.

The bird was lying on the ground flapping one wing. There was blood on it and its white lids were closing upward. Benedict was afraid to touch it.

"It's got diphtheria," he said. "That's why I shot it."

I knelt to pick it up.

"Birds don't get diphtheria," I said.

"They *do*," he screeched.

In a moment it was dead and horribly warm.

"We must bury it," I said.

"No," he said and stepped away. He was white and frantic.

"Come back," I said. "We can't leave it here. It's cruel." When I was small we always buried a bird if we found one dead.

"You must bury it," I ordered. "Dig a hole." He had no knife. Nor had I. I told him to get a stick. He obeyed and we started digging a hole in the soft ground.

"Make it deep," he said. He was excited now. At last the hole was deep enough and I put the poor bird in and raked the earth back. "More leaves, more leaves," he said. "In case a stoat digs it up."

"Did you get permission to have that gun?" I said. We were very hot about "getting permission" for things at school.

"It's Glan's," he said. Glanville was his father. "Is this your half-term?"

"No," I said. "I'm a weekly boarder."

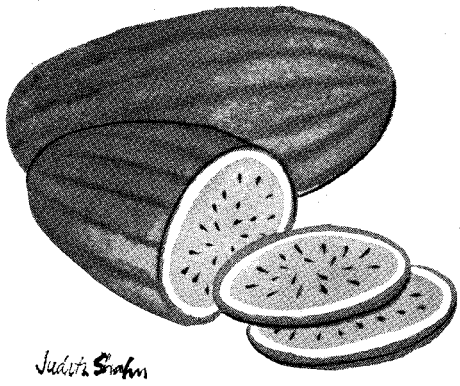
"The Devil lives here," he said. He had decided to frighten me.

"That's stupid," I said. "He doesn't exist."

"It's a she-devil," he said and he started jumping about in a jeering way.

"You're dotty," I said.

I now felt several drops of rain, then it was pattering down. This stopped us talking and we looked up. There was a strange change of light and then a rumbling noise. The air was hot and heavy. Thunder! We hurried out of the wood, which was filled with a new sour smell, and just as we got out of the trees there was a long yellow flash of lightning. The peal of thunder came at once.



Benedict gave one of his shrill laughs. "We'll be struck dead," he screeched.

"We must get away from the trees," I said. And then the rain came drenching down so that we could hardly see his distant house through it.

We started to run. My blue-and-white cotton dress was soaked at once and we were nearly blinded by the rain. There was another flash as we stumbled through the humps of the meadow and then mud splashed our legs. We were running toward the Shorts' house; thank goodness my father was away fishing. We got across the ditch onto Benedict's forbidden lawn and ran up to the veranda of the house. I looked around as we ran: no swimming pool in sight. The Major's wife was standing there calmly, and then the Major came out.

"Ah," he said in a calm, insinuating, conspiratorial voice. "The frightful Benedict and who has he brought with him? Is it the apple girl? I wonder. Yes, it is the apple girl."

I realized I had been watched from the house every time I walked past. I was afraid of him.

"Oh, Benedict, you're drowned," his mother said. "What a bore you are. What on earth got into your head, when you know the Crowthers and the others are coming any minute. And look at poor dear Sarah. Get inside." How did she know my name?

"Shall I take the firearm?" said

CHIDING THE VERY-GOD

I can't imagine medicine given me
by your hand. Maybe a human hand
holds a spoon to my lips—round bowl
full above a careful palm—or
places a small pill on my tongue.
The hand may move by reason of you.
Just now I'm speaking to no one.
I can see how the gray-blue spoon might
shine, the near hand move, move, and move.
How the hand's held out, to say, "Now,
here." Pity and sickness or grace, cure—
each received for all the mysterious reasons.

—Elizabeth Macklin

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Glanville Short to Benedict. "I wonder how it came into your possession?"

All houses have their smell. The Shorts' house was larger than ours and smelled of thyme and oil paint and old wood fires.

We were taken up the plain polished stairs of the house—the stairs of *our* house were carpeted—passing paintings of geometric faces which looked new. I remember two fat pink naked nymphs dancing on a big seashell and two naked young men standing looking at them. We passed a large room upstairs with bookcases going up to the ceiling and a picture of that tall man with the long black beard sitting in a basket chair and stroking a cat. I was pushed into a bathroom.

"Get it all off, I think, don't you, Sarah, my dear?" said Mrs. Short, who had a book in her hand. "While I see to Benedict."

What a bathroom! There was a blown-up painting or photograph of an ancient ruin, which continued on three walls of the room from floor to ceiling. I rubbed myself with a towel. When Mrs. Short came back I was staring at the painting.

"Is that the Roman Forum?" I said, showing off.

"No, that is Persepolis, my dear. In Persia." She pointed to a figure on a grand but broken stairway. "They say it is Darius—you remember?—but it doesn't seem possible. Now, I don't know what we're going to fit you out with." She had brought a bundle of shorts and jerseys with her.

"We were burying a dead bird," I said.

"We could turn the legs up. Do you mind pants?"

People coming, I thought, as I dried my hair. How awful.

"Please don't bother," I said as I pulled on the pants. "May I ring my mother?"

"I hope you don't mind, Ed. I just had to see you."

• •

"Now you're a boy—what do you make of that? Rather fun? How is your mother? I missed her at the chamber music last week."

So that rumor was true! I had always suspected that although we were ordered by my father not to know the Shorts, she and my mother still met at Newford.

"Rather chic, I think," she said, looking at me. "You must come down and get warm."

We went along the corridor and round corners to a second flight of stairs, down to a kitchen and through a cloakroom with a telephone in it, and then across the hall into a large morning room, where there was a music stand with a sheet of music on it near a large window, and a violin propped against one wall. A radio was on a big table with books and newspapers and also on the same table there was a large, unfinished jigsaw puzzle spread out.

And that is how I remember Emma Short always: a small woman with small, brown brilliant eyes, as dark as Benedict was, wearing a plain but pretty dress, chattering and eagerly questioning herself as she stands before the large puzzle of some famous picture—a cathedral or a castle perhaps, with a river in the foreground. This one also had the figure of a man with a boat on the river. She is standing there picking up a piece and saying, "How beastly they are to put so much water in these things. It's cheating. What a bore. Ah, now—here, do you think? No. No. Ah, perhaps here? You must look at the little wiggles." And she put

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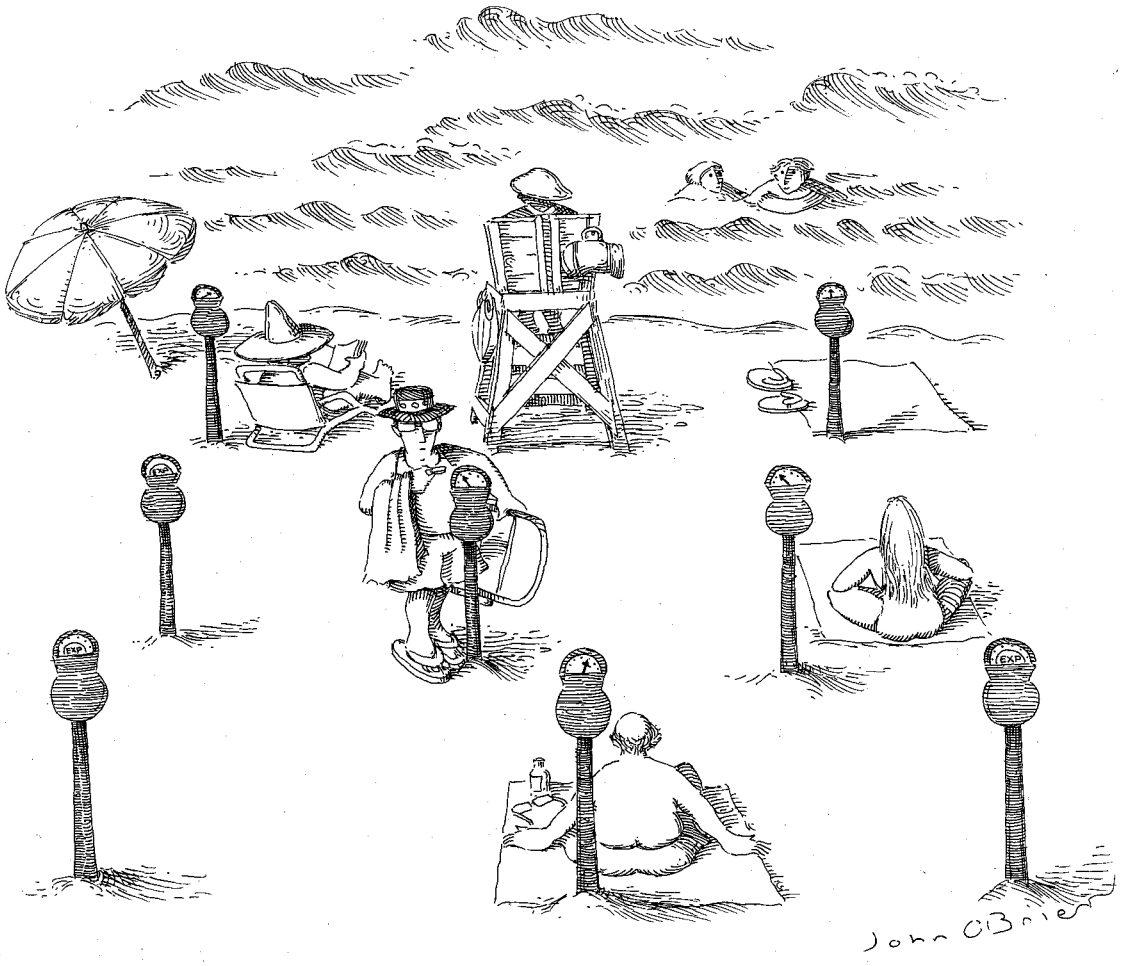

a curly piece of the puzzle into its place.

"You must know Mrs. Figg," she said.

"She teaches us French," I said, surprised.

"I *know!*" said Mrs. Short with a laugh. "Too extraordinary. What do you make of her? Odd, do you find? Her hats! Is Augusta a friend of yours? She's coming."

Augusta Chambers, head girl of my school! Augusta—to see me dressed up like this!

I said again I must telephone to my mother to fetch me.

"Glan will do that," she said. "You must have some tea to warm you up."

Through the window I saw two or three cars arrive. People and their children were soon jabbering in the hall. I heard Benedict screeching at them. As they came into the room Benedict was pulling Augusta's father by the wrist and saying, "Foxey, Foxey, you're a murderer, a murderer. I'm going to report it to the police."

"The number is 3052," said Augusta's father. "Shall I get it for you?"

There was a crowd of people taking off their coats in the hall. Benedict let Foxey's hand go, and Augusta came to me and said, "What fun." She whispered, "Benedict is mad, as usual."

I was muttering that I must go and getting nearer to the door to escape when Glanville Short stopped me. "I have told your mother," he said. "You're staying to tea."

Suddenly we were in a dining room, sitting round a very large painted table, which seemed to be an astrological map.

"Your marvellous table," said Augusta. And to me, "Emma designed it. Isn't it wonderful?"

I was still embarrassed by my ridiculous clothes. I had never seen so many people in my life, all talking their heads off. At home we lived to ourselves, as my father said. Doors were always shut in our house. Here all the doors were open and names were flying about. Everyone was asking questions about other people. Benedict was screeching. The walls of the room were painted pale violet. A number of people I had never heard of were declared "mad." A Mary somebody was "too extraordinary about her dogs." There was news that someone called Stephanie had lost the manuscript of a novel she was writing, on a bus, for the second time.

"What do you make of Chester?" someone said.

The city or some person? I could not guess. I was out of my depth in this new language, but Benedict was listening eagerly, as if enchanted by mockery when his father spoke.

Augusta's handsome brother sat between me and Emma Short. He asked where I lived and went to school. When I told him about school, he said, "Bad marks—it's on the Right Bank," which amused him. It was a long time, almost a year, before I found out what he meant, and by then I was mad about him. People like the Shorts (and, thank goodness, ourselves) were sometimes called the Left Bank of an imaginary river like the Seine in Paris. Newford was very Right Bank, Fordhampton was very Left.

Suddenly tea was over. Emma Short groaned. "It's still raining," she said. "What a bore. No croquet."

"But Emma," said Augusta's brother, "we could take umbrellas."

"Yes!" shouted Benedict, getting up. "Umbrellas, umbrellas—we'll get umbrellas!"

"I think it will have to be Cocky Olly," said Glan Short.

And they all shouted, "Yes, Cocky Olly!"

"I don't know it," I said.

"You do know it," Benedict insisted. "You must do. This is Cocky Olly Land—everyone plays it. It's Prisoner's Base."

"Cocky Olly" is the name that jumps into my mind even now when I drive past the signpost to Fordhampton. And when I look back on it,

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who could have been more of a Cocky Olly than myself, chasing the runaway boy across the fields.

"Cocky Olly!" we all shouted.

"No one to go into the bedrooms," said Emma Short. "Library and bathrooms are free."

"Including, I hope," said Foxey, "the pig's bathroom." He meant that Glanville had kept half a pig in brine in one of the bathrooms during the war. I had heard of this at home, and I had been told that it was illegal to cure a pig without registering the fact with the agricultural inspector. My father always said Major Short ought to be reported to the inspector and sent to jail.

And so with Foxey as Cocky Olly to start us off, the grownups and we children raced up the stairs and hid all over the house. Soon we were shouting warning cries of "Cocky Olly on the back stairs!" as everyone raced away. "Cocky Olly in the library!" "Cocky Olly in the passage!" "Cocky Olly in Annie's room!" and we raced up another flight, and Augusta, who had been caught, was shouting, "Rescue, rescue!" and Benedict was crying for rescue, too. I got to him and touched him. He was free. He was the most excited of us all. Round the house, up and down, we went. On a desk in the library, where Glanville worked, I came upon a huge book called "The Building of the Pyramids." It was written, Augusta told me, by that old man with the long black beard—the one I had seen peeing into the hedge, whose portrait was on the wall, not easy to see because the afternoon was dark. The rain was still coming down. Then the hue and cry came again, the sound of scattering people. I ran along the passage and made for a door where the passage turned a corner. Benedict had scooted there. We collided and stepped back into a small room where the curtains were drawn. Suddenly Benedict locked the door. "That's not fair," I said. I can hear myself, even now, saying it.

Benedict said in his shrill voice, "There's a dead body in here."

I was not going to be scared by him. I remembered what Foxey had done when Benedict called him a murderer.

"Yes," I said. "I know. I've reported it. It's on the floor. Give me the key or I'll put the light on."

He gave me the key at once.

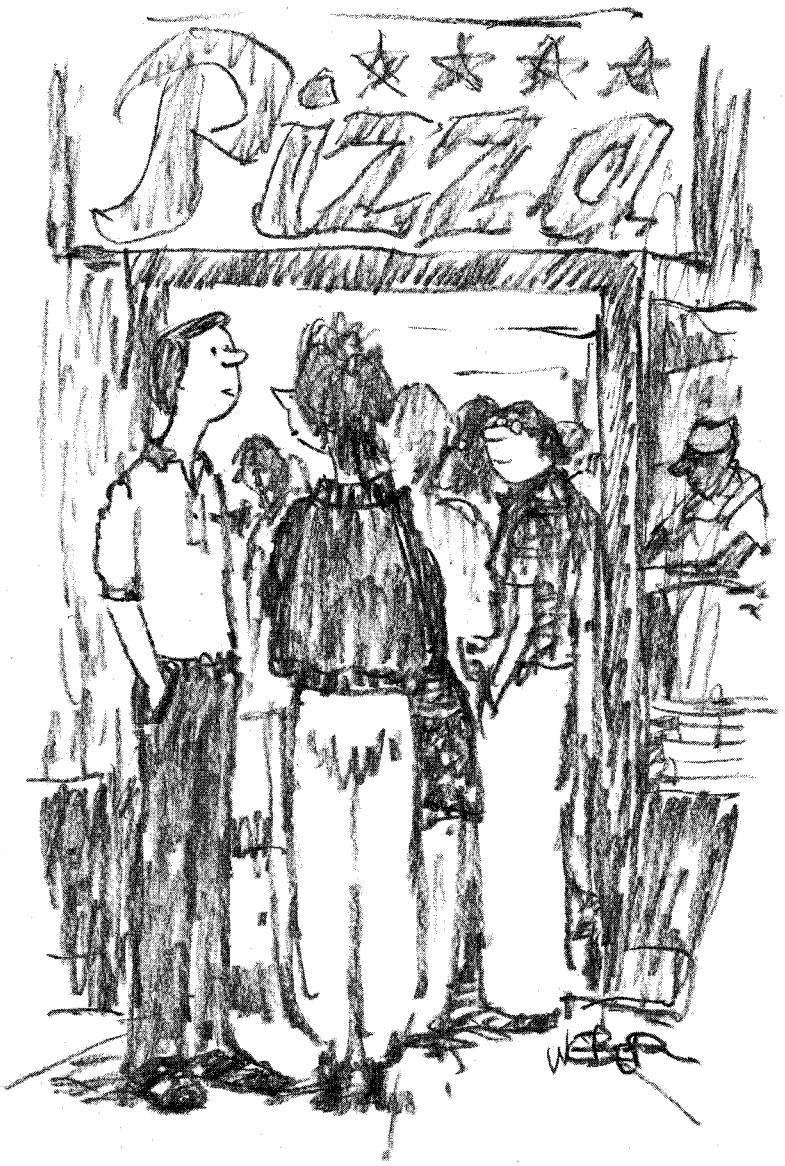
"This is your room," I said.

"It isn't," he said. "It used to be Nanny's, but we threw her out." I told him he couldn't scare me, and, in fact, after that I couldn't get rid of him. He followed me everywhere as we chased round in the game.

The grownups had gone down to the drawing room and eventually, hot and puffed, we went in to join them. It was a greenish silky room. Glanville was handing out orange juice to cool us down, and small glasses of gin, I suppose, to the grownups and to Augusta's brother, too. Glanville moved slowly, politely, with a sly conspiring look in his eyes as he gave us our drinks. He had been in the middle of telling a story when we rushed in, and now he continued. He had been on a jury at Winchester, he said, and there was evidence from a policeman who said he had seen the prisoner signalling to a confederate on a racecourse, and then the judge had said, "A signal, Officer? Would you be kind enough to do the signal for us?" and the officer made strange movements with his hand. The judge said, "Officer, would you mind doing that again?"

Glanville had a gift for acting. He could make you feel guilty by rolling his eyes and looking mysterious. In a fish shop in Fordhampton when I was with my mother we once heard him saying in his quiet accusing voice to the fishmonger, "Have you *fish*?"

I looked round at the pictures on the walls of the drawing room. There were two clowns and there was a painting of a sculptured head of a girl in profile, mounted on a



"Eventually I'd like to have a business where the money rolls in and I wouldn't have to be there much."

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short marble stand, a girl with large eyes, very beautiful.

"It's a Stolz," Augusta whispered to me.

"No, it isn't," said her brother. "It's a Webb in her Stolz period." And to me he said, in Mrs. Short's manner, "What do you make of it?"

"It looks chopped off," I said. I saw Augusta's brother was disappointed in me.

I looked at the heads of all the people in the room. They seemed to be like people from another planet. I was in love with them all and did not want to leave. And then Foxey said, "We must go," and Augusta said to me, "We'll drop you."

"No, I'll walk. It's only up the lane."

"You must come again," said Mrs. Short.

"I wonder whether we shall see more of the apple girl," said Glan in his conspiring mocking tone. "I think we shall."

I remember sitting next to Augusta's brother in the back of the car and Benedict waving frantically to us.

"Where are your clothes?" my mother asked when I was dropped at our house.

I had forgotten them.

"What a sight you look."

I could not stop talking about everything and everyone I had seen—the house, the huge tea table, the puzzle on Mrs. Short's table, the Persepolis in the bathroom. I explained that it was not my fault I had gone there, but I was worried about what my father would say. Mother made light of it. All she wanted to know was whether Benedict had played his violin.

This startled me.

"He is going to be *good*," my mother said in her thrilled voice. She was astonished that I did not know.

I could not go to sleep for thinking about it all: the rooms, the stairs, the girl's head, Benedict locking me in the room, and Augusta's brother. I looked at my room and hated our furniture and the smell of polish, and wanted to run away.

It was only in the morning that I remembered I had not seen the swimming pool.

I ADMIT that I left my wet clothes behind so that I would be able to return. The following morning, I went back to Lower Marsh openly by the road and down the avenue of elms, with a bundle of the Shorts' clothes under my arm, but kept back the shirt until it could be washed. The air was fresher after the storm. The front door of the house was open. There was no bell or knocker. I could hear Glanville talking on the telephone, which perhaps for some secret reason was in the cloakroom. At our house we had a proper telephone fitted in our hall.

I heard Glanville say on the telephone, "So you think well of Gentle Annie do you? I had rather fancied—" and I think he said "Monte Cristo." And then, "Rather dangerous, do you think? The going will be heavy after all the rain. Well, we must hope." Then he must have changed the subject, for in a conspiring, private voice he was saying, "I am inclined to agree with you, Foxey. I fancy that Oedipus is coming into the open. He is digging a grave in the garden—indeed, *two* graves. But we don't despair, Foxey. There is a filly, and we're pinning our hopes there. We shall have to see how it goes. Goodbye, Foxey."

Now what was that about?

Then he came out of the cloakroom and saw me.

"Ah, what have we here? The apple girl without her apple. She has brought a parcel. What can that be?"

He took the parcel and then, in his plotting way, said, "We must discover where the frightful Benedict is. Do you think he may be in the garden? Shall we go and see?"

I had decided that when he was buried under tons of earth by a land mine, or whatever it was, in the First World War, Glanville must have saved his life by asking himself innumerable questions. Perhaps that is silly, but he always looked at me or anyone else so steadily as he spoke that he was outside time and his blue eyes cast a spell. This made me shy, because he was not an old man. Now he led me through the house onto the long

"I think you'd look even more state-of-the-art if you put your leg on the desk."

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veranda and we looked down across the lawn. No sign of Benedict, so we went round the side of the house and there, in the paddock, we saw him. He was digging with difficulty in the tufty grass, and when we got to him we saw he had taped out two long rectangles side by side and had dug a few spadefuls of earth out of the end of one. As we watched, Benedict stuck the garden fork into the ground and danced around it.

"Can he be looking for buried treasure?" the Major asked.

Benedict jumped about crying, "Guess, guess, guess. Don't tell her, Glan."

I said he was making a flower bed.

"No, no, no," he called out. "Guess."

Mrs. Short came up from the garden and the Major explained why I was there. Benedict was annoyed because we were not talking to him.

"He says it is a swimming pool—one for men, one for ladies," said Mrs. Short.

We all laughed.

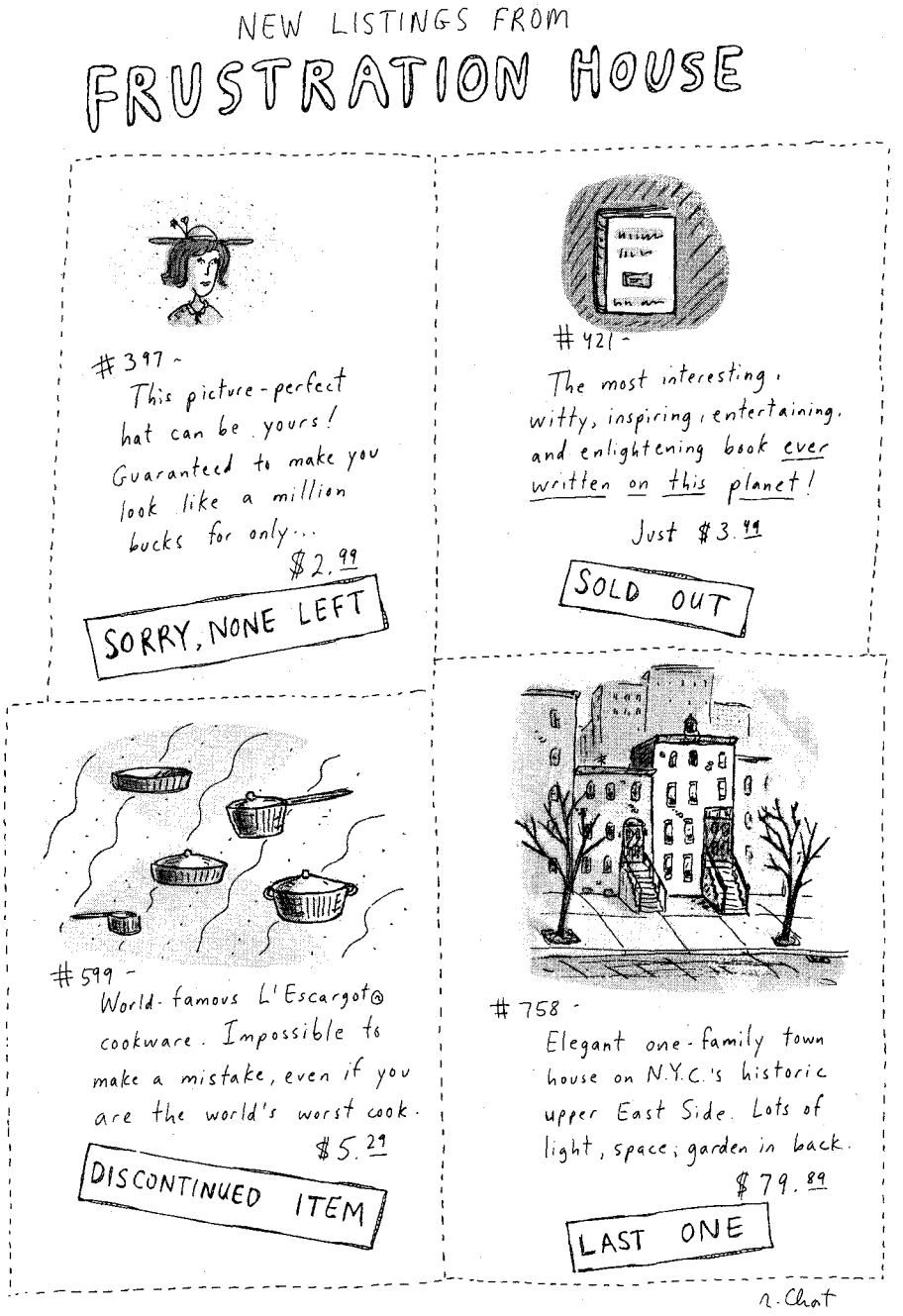
Benedict looked from one to the other of us. "I have changed it," he said. "It's an Egyptian tomb for Pharaoh."

"And this one, perhaps, for his wife?" said the Major, pointing to the second rectangle.

"Where is the pyramid?" I said.

"It's going to be a barrow," said Benedict. "An ancient mound."

The Major and his wife strolled away, and Benedict and I were left alone. I picked up the garden fork and tried to dig. "Don't do that," he said, and pulled the fork from me, rather frightened. "It's boring," he said.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LAST ONE
R. Chast

• • •

It was a lazy morning, one of those long mornings—how long they are when one is young—when you wander about and every minute is as long as an hour.

"I'm going to see the dead bird," he said at last.

I did not want to go home. I thought, This is where I want to stay, so I followed him. We crossed the hedge into the water meadow, where the air was cool, and listened to the swish of our shoes against the wiry grass and watched the insects jump away and stopped to listen to the larks singing like electric bells high up in the sky and tried to see them, and we seemed to walk from one electric bell to another. Like Benedict I was playing at running away. First he went ahead fast, but I soon caught up and passed him.

"Beat you," I said, and rumpled his head as I passed. He began to chase me. We passed the end of the wood where the dead bird was and got across the stream, where we messed about with sticks in the water and startled birds. Then we began to climb. I wanted to get to the top of the barrow, but it was longer and higher than I had imagined it would be. The view grew wider and wider and went on for miles, and there was no sound now. We were high above the singing larks. I could see our house and Benedict's standing quiet with the sun on them. We stopped and sat down. We were sitting on the bones of people who had died *millions* of years ago. There was no sound here except the wind, but then we heard the baaing of a ram. It sounded to me like the voice of a buried man, but I did not say this. We got up from where we were sitting and looked for it but could see nothing. The sound must have come from the ram far below. I nearly said, "The heights! How I love

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them!" but I didn't. Benedict, I thought, is too young; I was centuries older than he was. I wanted to stay there forever—not with Benedict but, say, with Augusta's brother, and when we stood for a last look on the miles of flat fields and clumps of trees where there would be a church tower and little houses on the far side, with a road wriggling round a wood, I wanted to go there, too. Suddenly—I don't know why—thinking of Augusta's brother, I marched up to Benedict and kissed him and ran off. He didn't like this and picked up a thorny stick and chased after me.

I stopped. "Why do you run away from school?" I asked severely.

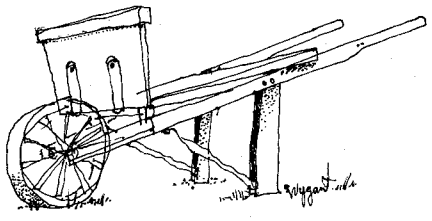
"I hate it," he said at once. "It's boring. I'm not going back."

The Devil was there, he went on. Benedict and the Devil! The Devil was dressed in red, he said. This time the Devil was the man who taught music there at his school. He was ignorant, stupid.

It was getting late. We went stumbling down the steep path, and as we got lower I could hear the skylarks again, no higher than my shoulder but far out over the fields below. I could almost have caught one of them.

When we got down to the meadow Benedict was angry when I said I had to get back home. "Stay, stay," he said, "I'll let you dig." But I said no, I didn't want to dig. He followed me across the meadow to our hedge, still saying "Stay." I said I had to pack up and go back to school in the afternoon. When I got through the hedge and called out "Goodbye," he shouted "I hate you!" I saw him walking away and then suddenly he ran and then he was out of sight. I don't know why I kissed him when we were on the barrow.

EVERYTHING changed at my school in Newford after that party at Lower Marsh. Augusta, who was a good deal older than I and taller, had never taken much notice of me, but now she came floating round me like a swan. She had long golden hair and large gray dreaming eyes that narrowed and dwelled in an inspecting way. She said, "I didn't know you knew the Shorts," in a way that suggested I had hidden a secret from her. Her voice seemed to float on romantic secrets. She was also our chief mimic and gossip. She'd do Mrs. Figg's sarcastic voice, and she knew which teacher was in love with an old don at Oxford who was married. She called two girls who doted on the art master "Picasso's Doves," and the headmistress "the blessed St. Agnes." To be with her was like reading a novel in serial parts; she paused and we knew there were chapters to come.



I told her that we did not really know the Shorts, though my mother, I thought, often met Mrs. Short at a musical quartet at Newford.

She narrowed her questioning eyes. "I adore Glan and Emma, don't you?"

And before I knew what I was say-

is seated on a step-
ladder, chin lifted, eye to eye-
piece of the telescope.

The round pupil collects
light, a gemstone pleated with facets—
the iris of zirconium—

in the smooth lavender mask of his face.
Three stiff legs hold high the lens
and convey its tiny field of specks

(which are stars) served on a glass.
Starlight falls through the surface
curved like a watch crystal.

Wayward light, so much scattered
gravel on a path, homes everywhere
to his mind. He moves the instrument

to find Venus: seeing it
is seeing a colored drop, yellow, sour,
a pale candy ball smoothed

by a curious mouth. Then
Jupiter shows against its wide side
many heavy moons, dead as BB shot

backlit by a huge and tender candescence.
A springy wire attaches to the mesh
of cranks to correct for Earth

rotation, whereby he stays a new object: small,
cinctured Saturn, wiggling in the cold pool.
Mosquitoes at his ears bite down

individual as cinders; faint streaks seep
from the tin sleeve onto the still face
held upward at the unsteady focus.

He re-aims the long scope,
training the empty artillery, adjusting
for altitude and azimuth by hand,

turning the little wheels to numbers
read from a table in a book. Slowly
he finds the thing he wants to

observe. But our White Moon, singly
rising into a universe of photographs,
floods the diameter,

obscures the oldest nebulous distance
with familiar radiance
in three dimensions,

and a sensation common
to passengers in an elevator—
collapse—overtakes him,

his concentration dissolves
into the clear sky. A startled face
drops back from under the ticklish,

sardonic long eye. The magnified
revolving heavens spin like an orrery,
from which he falls—

missing the last short step on the ladder—
to the lawn, where he sprawls,
serious, silly, ungraspably younger.

—JEAN ALICE JACOBSON

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ing I said there was some trouble about fir trees.

"Fir trees!" said Augusta with a laugh that egged me to go on, but I had come to a lame end.

We were going into supper and Mrs. Figg passed us. "Don't dawdle, Sarah," she said.

I was not a dawdling girl, and I saw that I must have been copying Augusta's dawdling walk. It was new to me, and I felt I had grown up several months. As we separated and went to our different tables Augusta said, offhand, "Of course, Benedict's quite mad. My father says it goes back to that awful pious nurse he had. She used to tell him that the Devil would get him and that he would go to hell. And then there was that awful Webb business." And, with that, she glided away.

But the phrase "that awful Webb business" and Augusta walking away with her I-know-more-than-you-do look made me dog Augusta whenever I could. And I could see by her face that she noticed this. We went off the next day to play tennis on the school court. She was a slapdash tennis player, and even the few balls that came over the net seemed to know something. When we left the court and went to our lockers to change I said, "My father didn't cut down those fir trees. It was old Webby who used to work for the Shorts as well as for us."

Augusta stood there with her blouse off. Her grownup breasts, larger than mine, seemed to be staring at me. The bell rang and we hadn't washed.

"Run along," she said. "Actually," she said—we all said "actually" in a cutting way in those days—"I was talking about Glanville's first wife. She died years ago. She drowned."

I felt I was like some silly fish dangling on a hook in hot air. I could not breathe.

"Come along, girls," Mrs. Figg called from the door of the dormitory. I choked my way into my clothes. I sluiced my face and through the water I saw the astonishing stone face of the drowning Webb in the drawing room at Lower Marsh.

Poor Benedict, I thought, and I ran down the clattering stairs to the dining room. I mumbled my way through grace and saw Augusta across the room saying grace beautifully, her lovely chin raised. Later she ate slowly, while I was racing through my food and spilled my milk. I was still wriggling on Augusta's hook. I was in her power.

But Augusta was merciful to me, or else, I suppose, she saw the kind of opportunity she loved. If she was dreamy, she was also crisp.

In our free time it was easy for girls to be in twos, lying in the grass, and at last I was able to say, "Poor Benedict, his mother drowned." This explained the strange things he did, and his talk of the body in the room.

"I did not say that," said Augusta scornfully. "Emma is his mother. Glan was married to Webb. *Then* he married Emma. What a thing to say! Did your father say that? If he did, it's very wicked," she said sharply.

I said no, he'd never said anything like that, nor my mother, I swore. Augusta was still suspicious of this, but at last she saw how confused I was, and she forgave me. She said that Glanville had married a Miss Webb when he came home after the First World War; everyone was mad about her. It was not until much later that I began to wonder how Augusta knew the story. It must have happened *before* the war and she wasn't born then. But she said that Webb had gone off to Egypt with a painter called Stolz and that he had left her, and so she had come home and drowned herself in the river at Fordhampton.

The one where father can't afford to fish, I thought. And then I thought of Benedict digging a grave for Pharaoh and his wife in his garden.

I had already told Augusta about this the day after Cocky Olly, but when I mentioned it again now, Augusta cut the story short. "That boy is always digging," she said. "He wants to be an archeologist, like that man in Glanville's library." And she said dreamily, "I would never be a second wife, unless he was like Glanville."

We got up from the grass laughing. I mean, *I* laughed; Augusta didn't. Anyway, she said, Emma and Glan were sending Benedict to the grammar school in Newford. That would stop him running away because he'd come home every day by train. And she gave

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me one of her narrow-eyed looks. The Shorts were her possession.

THE long holidays began. My father took us to Devonshire to stay in a hotel near a place where he went fishing. Mother and I went on long walks, and the only event of the day was to come back by the bridge over the river to catch sight of him. We were not allowed to go near him when he was fishing. Once or twice we drove ten miles to a high red-faced cliff—they were not chalky cliffs as they are in our part of the country. The waves were forever staining the sand red near the shore. We used to park on the cliff with other cars and walk not too near the edge and look at the sea glittering some days and on others tumbling fast down the Channel. I loved the Channel because it was wider here. This was the only time I thought of the Shorts and Benedict, for they were in Brittany. *La mer:* what a beautiful word! We had a set book by Pierre Loti to read in the holidays. My mother said she, too, had had to read it at school when she was a girl, yet she was no help with the words I didn't know.

So, back home again. It seemed dull. I rushed to my post at the end of our garden and looked across the water meadow, but there was no sight of Benedict on the first day. In the middle of the week I did see him in the distance with a girl taller than he and making for his house. I waved. They did not see me, and I tried to make myself look larger when they came into closer view. I waved again. They still did not see me. I felt something like a red-hot electric wire run through me—a wire that seemed to turn into a flame, as if I were alight. Then I went icy cold. Benedict was with Augusta! I was flaming with jealousy. I watched till they went out of sight.

My father was in the garden talking to my mother, who was pulling up weeds. I got carried away and went out to the road and walked along to the Shorts' drive. There were cars outside the house, one of them Foxey's red car. A party. And I wasn't invited. I was stiff with misery. I went back to my room and tried to read, but I was listening, for hours it seemed to me, to hear the cars drive away. When I went to bed my jealousy went. I remembered that the next week I would see Benedict on the train to and from school.

But this was not so. On the first day of term Augusta told me that Benedict's mother was going to drive him to his grammar school and bring him back each day. So I became a parcel again on my weekly journey. On Monday mornings I saw the politician doing his morning trot up and down the platform, and weekend people going to London with their papers, and a few grammar-school boys who got in at Kings Hill and played cards all the way. Their school caps had a yellow ring round them. On Saturday afternoons there was always a larger crowd of them going back to their homes in Kings Hill or Fordhampton. About a dozen of them would stand on the platform bashing one another with their cases, and cheeking the woman who ran the buffet. Sometimes she turned them out. They crowded round the slot machines and tried to force them to yield up coins. I used to sit on a seat watching them. The porters grinned at the boys, but the ticket inspector hated the way they pushed past him. Sometimes a boy would be pushed onto my seat and I would walk away higher up the platform. There was a fat boy who was always eating chocolate.

The first Saturday I saw Benedict, he was keeping clear of the other boys. "Hullo," he said eagerly in his high voice, and the fat boy mocked, "Squeaky's got a little t-tart."

They stared at us and then went on pushing one another around. Benedict was carrying his violin case. I had never seen that before. I asked him why he wasn't wearing the school cap.

"Because I hate it," he said.

I can't remember what we talked about except that I told him that I had seen him with an old lady walking across the water meadow and had waved to him. He was startled.

"A witch," he said.

"No, it wasn't," I said. "It was Augusta. Don't tell her I said that."

"I'll tell," he said.

"I'll have the peach pie, and my husband will succumb to the crème-de-menthe parfait."

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"He's my escort, and he's a teddy bear."

• •

I knew he would, because every now and then after our train came in and we took our seats he said, "I'll tell, I'll tell."

At Fordhampton, Glan was waiting for him, and my mother was there as well.

"Aha!" said Glanville in his insinuating way. "The apple girl."

"It seems damn silly," said my father to my mother when I got home. "Why couldn't he have given Sarah a lift and saved you the trouble? Save petrol, too. Typical socialist."

"You don't give the boy a lift," Mother said.

"Don't be an owl," Father said. "That man's got nothing to do."

So every Monday and Saturday I travelled on the train with Benedict. He had become quieter and it seemed that he had settled into the school. It was "beastly" there, of course, but chiefly, he said, because the music master was angry when he told him the school piano was out of tune. He also hated Prayers, and the fat boy who got into the train at Kings Hill was the Devil. This came out one morning when a man across from us was reading a newspaper with a headline in big print: "CLIFF MURDER: HUNT FOR BRIGHTON YOUTH." Benedict began jumping up and down in his seat and said the fat boy had done it. "It's Fatty! It's Fatty!" he said in a furious whisper. I told him not to be silly. At school I told Augusta this was now the only sign of Benedict's being mad, but she had changed this term. She said it was Glanville who put these ideas into his son's head. Foxey said so, too. But after this Benedict was calm. One day he brought his stamp collection and he showed it to me, and once I ruffled his black hair when he said I was as fat as Augusta. I knew what he meant: I was growing up. I told him Augusta would marry him if he was not careful, and I laughed because he looked scared. He was very polite after that.

I ENJOYED those train rides and I missed him for two weeks when he had flu. I was glad to see him when he reappeared on the platform at Newford Station. I had got there late because I had gone into one of the shops in the town to buy a lipstick like Augusta's. I had run all the way from the shop, frightened that I had missed the train. At first I didn't see Benedict. Some boys were crowded round the fat boy as usual, begging him to give them a bit of his chocolate. The fat boy was backing away from them and Benedict was watching. The fat boy was sly and stood back against the wall, looking around for some way of escape. One boy was pulling at his arm. Suddenly the fat boy broke from them and went up to Benedict, snatched his cap from his pocket, and cried, "Put your cap on, Squeaky, or I'll report you."

Benedict stood holding his violin case and did not put his cap on, and the fat boy suddenly stepped forward and pulled the cap down over Benedict's eyes and face. I called out, "Leave him alone."

And then I saw Benedict do a stupid thing. He pulled his cap off and sent it flying off the platform and onto the railway track, and then, white with fright, he dashed at the fat boy and struck him on the shoulder with his violin case, screeching out, "I'll kill you!"

The fat boy moved away, frightened. Two women were watching us, and one of them said, "I will report you to your headmaster," and she said to her friend, "It's Major Short's boy." I got Benedict by the sleeve and we walked away from the crowd. I was giddy with temper and walked him far up the platform, and when I looked back I saw the boys gaping at the cap lying on the railway line. Two boys were beginning to follow us, but the others were still crowding round Fatty. And then the train came in. I got Benedict into a first-class carriage in front. Three of Fatty's crowd raced up looking for us, but I pulled down the blind. I could hear the porters bawling, and the boys ran back. We sat still; the

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compartment had a notice saying "Ladies Only." There was a long wait and a strange silence at our end of the train. I let down the window and saw some of the boys getting off the train, all laughing. I heard a porter shout, "Not this train!" A whistle blew. The train, I saw, was much longer than the train we usually took.

"We're on the wrong train," I said. "It's the express. Quick. It doesn't stop at Fordhampton," and I tried to open the door. Then the train—one of the new diesels—moved out fast. I turned round. Benedict was lounging back on the seat.

"I knew!" he said, laughing at me.

"You beast," I said.

I was scared. I saw the last of the pink houses of Newford and heard the chime of the signal box, as final and frightening as if it were killing itself with laughter. My father and mother would be waiting for me at Fordhampton and the train would whiz through. And that woman from Lower Marsh who had heard me shout in the mixup with the boys—she would report it all to my father. I lost my head.

"Why didn't you tell me it was the wrong train?" I said. "I hate you."

"I'm running away," he said, delighted by my terror. "I hate that school. I hate Glanville. I'm not going back."

There is a long wooded stretch outside Newford and all the leaves on the trees seemed to be talking about us. Had he planned it?

"Where are you going?" I said.

He was sitting there gloating and grinning. "To London," he said. "To my aunt's."

"But that's the opposite direction. This train goes to Bath."

"I'll get a London train there," he said.

"You're mad. It's hundreds of miles away."

What frightened me was that I had only two shillings on me.

"How much money have you got?" I said.

"My aunt lives in Bath. She'll give me the money," he said.

The train was speeding. Two little stations went by like a shout.

"The Devil is on this train," he said with glee. "I saw him on the platform."

I was standing up still, and the train swerved at Kings Hill when it crossed the river. A man was fishing there. I fell onto my seat. I was tired of Benedict and his Devil.

"I'll rape you," he said.

"You won't," I said. "Silly little Squeaky." And I got up and rumpled his hair. "You'd better look at your violin. You smashed it when you hit that boy."

This stopped him. He opened his case and took out his violin and looked at it very carefully and then he took up his bow and played one or two notes. They sounded very sad. All this time I had been trying not to cry, and it was the sound of those notes, like someone speaking, that stopped me. In that moment I recovered my wits. I looked about the compartment and noticed the communication cord. A notice said, "Emergency. To stop train pull this cord. Penalty for improper use £2." I was scared. When the train got near Fordhampton I knew I was going to pull the cord and make it stop there. I sat down and got out one of my schoolbooks and pretended to read, but I was looking at the fields. When the train got to Flour Mill I would get ready to pull the cord. This calmed me. I got up and said, "I am going to the lavatory." I was dying to go. "There's one for you at the other end of the corridor," I said.

There was the door marked "Toilet. Vacant." I went in. The window was of frosted glass so that I couldn't see out, but I could tell by the sound of the train crossing the river where we were. We'd crossed one bridge. There were two more to come. I knew how long that took. I wasn't long in the lavatory before someone tried the door. I waited. Then I pulled the catch. It had stuck. It wouldn't open at first; when it did there was the ticket inspector on the other side. The inspector always tested the door, in order to catch anyone hiding from him. He was a big man with a red face and a black mustache like a wet paintbrush.

"Sorry, Miss. Ticket, please."

"It's in my bag in the compartment," I said. He looked at my hat—we wore straw hats with a red band at my school—and slowly followed me to the compartment. Benedict was not there, and as I opened my bag I heard a deep rumbling noise, louder than the noise of river bridges. We were rushing over the High Street at Fordhampton. The station platform screeched at us, people flew away in a stream of dots, the green top of the

"A first-class stamp, please. Something casual."

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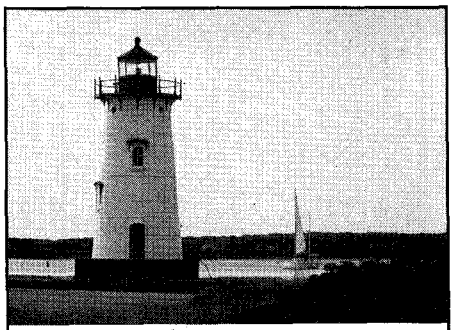

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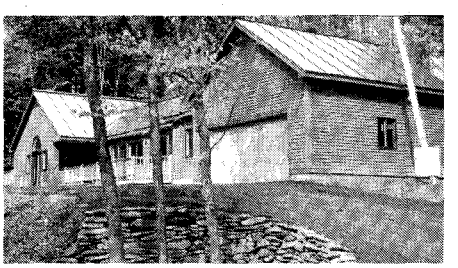

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"I'll assume, then, my remarks have hit a responsive chord?"

• •

Town Hall danced away, and the brick orphanage on the outskirts of the town looked down on us from fifty narrow windows. I had forgotten this was an express train. With a final clap Fordhampton vanished, the points clattered, and the oak woods closed in on us. Benedict came into the compartment.

"Ticket," the ticket inspector said to Benedict, who got out his train pass.

"We're going to Bath," Benedict said coolly.

"You're in first class!" said the inspector. "Fordhampton, it says here. That your violin? We've passed Fordhampton."

He took my train pass and looked at it and said the same thing. Then he sat down with us and got out a printed pad. "Both going to Bath? Plenty of room in third class in the next coach."

He slowly turned the pages of his pad. "You'll be owing me some money," he said. "Ten pounds each. You got in at Newford, I see. It comes expensive." He looked very sly when he said this and then sighed and said sharply, "First class—let me see. Fifteen pounds each, I make it. Holidays begun early, eh? Playing in a concert?" He was looking around in the compartment, and I knew he was trying to see if we had smashed the bulbs or slashed the seat.

"We got into the wrong train and some boys locked us in. We thought it was the Fordhampton train," I said. "My father is waiting for us. He's a brigadier. It's terrible. No one told us at Newford. I'm not going to Bath, and we missed our lunch."

"Well, it will be a long wait," said the inspector. "But your friend's going to Bath. With his violin?"

"No, I'm going to London. I'm in the school orchestra," Benedict said calmly.

I was so amazed I could only say, "Benedict!"

"I am," said Benedict.

"It's a funny way to go to London. Down to Bath, up to London, wrong way round. Cost you more. Twenty-five pounds, I make it."

"Where is the buffet car?" said Benedict, putting on an important voice.

The inspector said it was two coaches back. "Stay where you are," he said. He got up slowly. He put his pad in his pocket and said he'd be back later on. We waited and waited.

"Why did you tell such lies? We'll be arrested."

"Let's go to the buffet car," Benedict said. "I'm hungry."

If only I hadn't bought that lipstick. With only my two shillings, we couldn't pay for lunch.

The train broke out of the Downs, where there was a white horse carved on the hill, and into unknown country: herds of cows in the fields, farms, chickens, horses galloping away. This flat country went on, mile after mile. Farther and farther. I worried where we would go in Bath, where we would sleep the night. Terrible tales came into my mind of girls attacked on trains. I was thinking about what my father had said about the Shorts.

"You're not giving a concert," I said. "You can't even play."

"I can," he said. He opened his case and got his violin out, but I asked if he had got any money. He pulled out a few coppers from his pocket. "Come on," he said. "Let's go to the buffet car. I'll tell them to send the bill."

But before we could move the inspector came back with a young man, who stood in the doorway studying us and murmured something I couldn't catch.

"Stand up, Ben," this man said.

"My name is Benedict," said Benedict. He could be as cool and ironical as Glanville.

The young man said, annoyed, "Where's your school cap?"

I burst out, "A boy threw it on the line at Newford when the train was coming in."

"What was his name?" asked the man.

"Fatty," said Benedict.

"Better check at Castle Wadney,"

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said the young man to the inspector. They went off down the corridor.

The train was gliding past wide fields of mustard, a few big clouds were hanging still in the sky. Presently the train slowed down almost to a standstill, and when I looked out I saw a gang of men standing back: they were working on the line. I can still remember every one of their faces looking up at me. Then we crawled past watercress beds to Castle Wadney, a town on a hill but with no castle that I could see. The train had stopped.

"Police," whispered Benedict excitedly.

The inspector came back and said, "Soon get you back, Miss. You're getting out here."

At that busy station porters were rolling milk cans down the platform. We were taken to the stationmaster's office, a dark room smelling of ink and tea. The stationmaster was drinking a cup in between talking on the telephone, and there was a machine somewhere that clicked dot, dot, dash. A man at another table called "Brighton on the line for you" to a very clean young man with hair short at the neck, who went to the telephone.

One of these new men looked at our train passes and asked our names again. I showed him mine on my exercise book. Someone was having a row with the stationmaster, who held the phone away from his ear.

"Sure it's not Knowles?" the smooth young man asked Benedict.

"Short. Short. Short," Benedict jeered.

"Short," I joined in. "I mean he's Short, I'm—"

"I'm asking him," said the smooth young man. "How do I know your name's Short, son?" he asked.

And then Benedict did a thing I'll never forget. He turned his back to the man and pulled the neck of his jacket clear of his neck until the name tape was showing.

The detective held the jacket and called to the two new men. "Take a dekko at this."

" 'Short,' " they both said. "O.K., Sonny."

"Hold on, they're on the line," said the stationmaster into the telephone. Then he beckoned to us.

Glanville was on the line. Emma, too. And my father. When we had stopped talking to them the two inspectors had gone and so had our train. We

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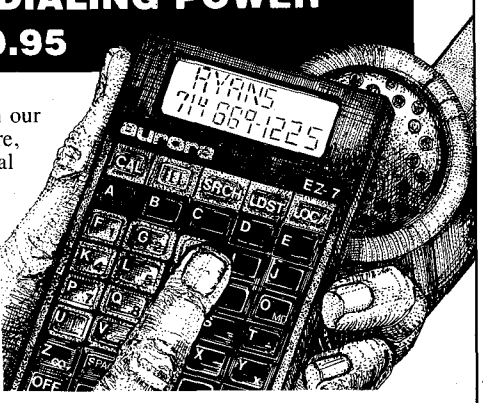

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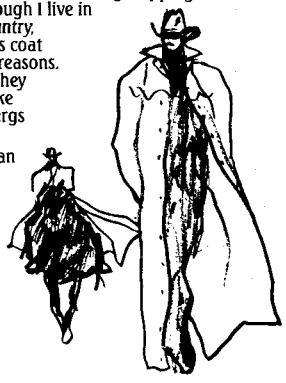

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were going to be sent back on the 3:44.

One of the detectives said, "Sorry, Miss." And the other said, "On the lookout for a lad from Brighton. You won't miss your concert," he said to Benedict and went off.

"Watch out," whispered Benedict. "They'll follow us." He was delighted.

The stationmaster took us to the buffet and told the woman there to give us what we asked for and to give the bill to him. He told Benedict his daughter was taking piano lessons. We were put on the 3:44 to Fordhampton, and I felt sad going back.

"It was the Brighton Cliff Murder," said Benedict. "They thought we were in on it."

And indeed a youth had taken the hand brake off his parents' car, jumped out, and left them to go over the cliff. There was a picture of a boy very like Benedict with curly hair. We saw it all when a man got in at one of the stops with the picture on the inside page and a headline saying "HUNT MOVES TO WEST COUNTRY." I muttered to Benedict, "Keep quiet or I'll strangle you."

Benedict started bouncing with delight on his seat. He said that Glan had told him all about the murder. And he started to tell me. The Devil would be in it, I knew.

"*Stop it*," I said. "Not now. You promised me."

The train was a slow one. The man got out at Stockney. And then I said, "Why did you say you were going to Bath?"

"To see the Roman ruins," he said.

"But you said London, too, to give a concert," I said. I couldn't keep up with him.

"I am going to the College of Music next term," he said.

I began to tease him. "There was a devil on *this* train—it was you," I said and gave him a push.

There is nothing to say about our arrival at Fordhampton, except that my mother was talking to Mrs. Short, and Benedict was talking all the time to Glan, telling him how he had shown his name tape to the detective. Father was talking to the stationmaster, who was shaking his head.

"I gave the stationmaster at Newford a blowing up," Father said. "I mean, suppose they'd been troops?"

"It's the staff, you know what I mean," said the stationmaster. "Your daughter's here."

"Oh," said my father, astonished to see me. And then he saw Glanville and stiffened. "All present and correct," he said sarcastically.

In the car driving home I began telling my father and mother what had happened, but Father said, "Wait till we get home."

Mother said, "You should have pulled the alarm cord."

Father said, "Costs two pounds. I haven't got two pounds."

I didn't say anything about Benedict's saying he was running away. Father was already revelling in the war he was now beginning with the railway company. He was going to write to the chairman at once. He was going to get someone at the War Office to blow them up. Mother's eyes shone.

When I went to school on Monday Benedict was not on the train, but Mrs. Figg had heard the story, because Mother had rung the school. Augusta knew, too. Then she told me that once a man had exposed himself in a train when she was there, in a full compartment!

What did she do? "Nothing," she said grandly. "I turned my head away and looked out of the window."

That weekend my mother picked me up at my school and Benedict at his and drove us back to the Shorts, and I was invited for tea. Father said it was the least they could do.

Mrs. Short was standing by her puzzle when I got there, a new one of a castle.

"It's a beast," she said. There were a dozen people at that beautiful table and Benedict was crowing and interrupting his father. Then it was Cocky Olly again and all of us racing around.

—V. S. PRITCHETT

•

SEEING

Seeing,
The silence at the core,
The core unseen and still
As always, but the before
Unquiet at the sill,
Confusion at window or door

Now vanished,
The cameral darkness freeing
The clarity of light
To the stillness of the being,
To the silence of the sight
The immediacy of seeing.

—DENIS CORISH

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

CAFETERIA

TO a lot of people, the word "cafeteria" conjures up visions of school lunchrooms, Army mess halls, and sad urban hash houses left over from the Depression. In the South and parts of the Midwest, however, cafeterias are excellent places to eat—the nicest restaurants in many towns and small cities. The best of them—such as Laughner's, in Indiana; Highland Park, in Dallas; the Belle Meade, in Nashville; and Bryce's, in Texarkana—are known for attention to detail and for amenities that are normally associated with linen-tablecloth establishments. While food writers have romanticized diners, drive-ins, and barbecue pits in recent years, cafeterias have received little attention; they aren't as offbeat or as deliciously vulgar. They are utterly square, which is why steady customers like them, and why they appeal as well to travellers who cherish local foodways. Many cafeterias are helping to preserve a regional cuisine that is unadulterated by faddishness. In many areas, cafeterias are the only restaurants that still serve such specialties as collard greens and black-eyed peas (at the Davis Brothers chain, in Georgia and Florida), hoppin' John and Huguenot tortes (at Robertson's, in Charleston, South Carolina), griddle-cooked corn bread (at Hap Townes, in Nashville), and Indiana farm pie (at Laughner's). But it isn't only the food that makes cafeterias interesting; in communities where they thrive, the ritual of eating in them has become an authentically American culinary experience.

Among the great cafeterias, the Laughner's chain is unique. There are five Laughner cafeterias in Indianapolis, one in Plainfield, one in Terre Haute, and one in Kokomo, and they all combine self-service, a prosperous milieu, and low prices in a manner that no other restaurant equals. Cafeteria dining elsewhere can seem institutional, but Laughner's—a small business compared to national restaurant chains—has an engaging Hoosier personality. Run for four generations by the same family, it is a business that spans the history of cafeterias in America, and is the oldest of the cafeteria dynasties. The Laughners have reworked their formula many times. Their newest store, a "super cafeteria" that opened in October of 1987, offers a menu of grilled fish, boutique ice cream, and French pastries alongside the classics that made Laughner's famous—sliced "steamship round" roast beef, custard pies, fruit pies, and what may well be the best fried chicken in the Midwest.

Sunday, when families come en masse to eat well, is the day cafeterias are in their glory. At a Laughner's, Sunday-dinner service begins at 10:45 A.M. By noon, the parking lot at the Franklin Road Laughner's in Indianapolis is full, and the waiting line stretches out into a breezeway and thirty yards along the front of the building. The building is a Tudor-style shed of stone, brick, and wood, topped by a mansard roof with braided concrete tiles at the ridge line and an American flag flying overhead. It is next to I-465, Indianapolis's beltway, on a road thronged with fast-food establishments, great malls with acres of parking, and dozens of service stations.

In the lobby of the Franklin Road

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cafeteria, roadside enterprise seems far away. The décor is pubby Old English: lead-framed stained-glass windows, wood panelling, an antique grandfather clock, brass wall sconces, a pewter chandelier. Oak beams are supported by lions' heads formed from a mixture of plaster and plastic foam. Leather wing chairs and a tapestry-upholstered couch are gathered around a massive fireplace. Above the fireplace hangs an oil painting of a smiling Colonial couple—the squire in red velvet coat, white ascot, and powdered wig, the woman in a low-cut blue dress that exposes a robust cleavage.

On Sunday, many families come to Laughner's straight from church. Sometimes nearly a whole congregation will arrive in procession. One recent Sunday, a bride in a white gown led her bridegroom, in a tuxedo, and the entire wedding party along the cafeteria line, the bride's father bringing up the rear, so he could pay for everybody's tray. Because services in black churches in Indianapolis tend to run longer than services in white ones, the noontime crowd on Sunday is nearly all white. By three in the afternoon, the dining room is integrated. Small children are hoisted into a Laughner's invention—a high chair on wheels, designed to be pushed along the line by an adult. Old people with canes or walkers are a common sight. Even those too feeble to carry a tray often manage to push one along the tray rail; for them, as for pregnant women, Laughner's provides tray carriers at the end of the line.

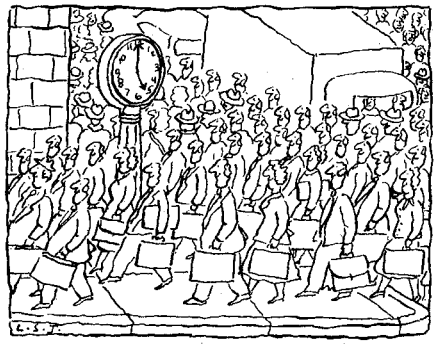
Diverse though the customers are, they have a homogeneous look, like different-shaded pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Many of them wear the colors of the heartland: pale-pastel dresses that never skim above the knee; high-heeled white pumps with matching purses; pearl necklaces, or small crosses on gold chains. Men's lapels sport Masonic or other fraternal pins. Children, who get their food served on special plates decorated with rabbits, toy soldiers, and jack-in-the-boxes, are as tidy as their parents and grandparents: cowlicks tamed, ears scrubbed pink, shoes shined. Clipped to boys' white shirts are stiff narrow neckties. Many girls favor hairdos of well-lacquered sausage curls. Nearly everyone is flushed with excitement.

Customers pass through a portal above which is a gold-lettered message cut into a wooden scroll: "THIS WAY TO GOOD EATING." They become part of what is known as the preview line. All the choices are visible from here, but in a tantalizing way: the food is intermittently blocked from view by customers moving down the food line and filling their trays.

It takes at the most ten minutes to wind through the preview line and get to the beginning of the service line. Then it's time to take a tray and set it on the rail along the steam tables. Bundles of silverware are next—knife, spoon, and two forks wrapped in a maroon cloth napkin. The tray rail travels a course of sixty-two feet and nine inches, past a ravishing inventory of a hundred different things to eat, displayed behind a glass partition open at the bottom. Regulars walk in knowing exactly what they want, but many cafeteriagoers clearly relish the thrill and anxiety of being forced to make a last-minute choice, under pressure of the line of people moving up behind them.

Behold the salads. Planted in a field of chopped ice are fresh fruit salads (seven different varieties), chef's salad, green salad, spinach salad, shrimp salad, plain yellow gelatine cubes, plain green gelatine cubes, blocks of mandarin-orange whipped gelatine with marshmallows, strawberry-cream gelatine, frosted cranberry gelatine, vinegar coleslaw, vinegar-onion coleslaw, cream slaw, carrot-and-raisin slaw, marinated cucumbers, marinated mushrooms, plain cottage cheese, pasta salad, three-bean salad, green-bean-and-pea salad, macaroni salad, sliced tomatoes, chunky cranberry sauce, ambrosia, strawberry-and-banana compote. The gelatine salads and some slaws are already portioned out in little bowls. Greens and composed salads are displayed in large bowls and parcelled out when ordered.

"May I help you, Ma'am?" Every step of the way, questions are thrown at



customers by Laughner's employees—uniformed, whether male or female, in white shirts, black vest-aprons, and black bow ties. "What would you like today, sir?" Like the customers, the employees are of all ages and are racially diverse. They embrace their jobs as if they were paid commissions, but they are not. They aren't rude, and they would never pressure a patron, but their patter gives each transaction a sense of speed and purpose.

"What can I get for you today, sir?" a young man behind the partition asks an elderly man in a pale-blue suit.

The man's wispy white hair seems to stand on end with alarm, and his face blushes pink in the bright lights of the serving line. He turns to his wife. "What is it I like, dear?"

"You like sausage with apple fritters and green-bean casserole."

"Sir?" the server asks again.

" 'Sausage,' you said?" the man whispers to his wife.

"I'm sorry, sir," the server explains. "We don't have the sausage today. Would you care for some pork loin? Or what about the country-fried steak? It's very popular."

Steak it is. Tongs set a crusted slab of beef upon a plate.

At no station do customers handle the food themselves. Unlike help-yourself salad bars and buffet tables, cafeterias present their food in a state of untampered-with perfection. Every step of the way, portions are measured out and presented according to house standards. Cheese sauce is drizzled precisely onto each order of cauliflower; corn chips are scattered over every taco salad in a pattern that is generous but never profligate. The food in the serving trays is never allowed to look dishevelled. Salads nestle in decorative bouquets of kale. Sprigs of parsley or slivers of red pepper highlight monochromatic vegetables. Steam-table trays are small enough to get replenished almost constantly, so the food in them is always fresh.

After the display of salads come desserts. The order of the types of food, while gastronomically strange, makes good business sense. The concept is to begin with the exciting dishes—the baroque gelatinized salads, the rich pies—and move on to sedate main courses, to homely vegetables, and, finally, to beverages.

A buxom woman catches the eye of a dessert server and points to a plate

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holding a slice of strawberry pie—a signature dish at Laughner's since the nineteen-sixties. A pale, fragile bottom crust supports a heap of huge whole berries encased in a luminous glaze. "I want *that* piece," she says. The server grabs its nearly identical twin. "No, no, no, not that one—*that* one," she says. "Yes, that's the one, the big one. I dieted all week for it." She makes room for it on her tray next to a salad of miniature marshmallows, pineapple chunks, pecans, and American cheese.

All of Indiana's finest restaurants flaunt their pies. At Laughner's, the daily roster includes classic double-crusters and lattice-topped fruit pies, custard pies without top crusts, cream pies, and meringue pies. Apple-walnut pie looks flamboyant next to a simple sugar-cream pie. Diet fruit pies, artificially sweetened, vie for attention with slices of New Orleans sour-cream pie (like mince pie but much richer) and millionaire's pie (coconut flakes, chocolate chips, and pecans suspended in a gooey amber filling). As a group, meringue pies are the showiest. Crowning each piece is a foam-white cloud gilded with caramelized froth. Below the meringue triangle is a lode of banana cream, butterscotch, lemon, chocolate, or coconut cream.

The bread station, which comes after desserts, is not a place to linger. "Roll, Ma'am?" the bread girl queries, sweeping a hospitable hand over her small kingdom: soft, puffy breadsticks almost a foot long, baking-powder biscuits handed out two at a time, and large pull-apart dinner rolls. "Can I interest you in some corn bread today, or a cracked-wheat loaf, or a cinnamon roll?" The server's spatula lifts a cinnamon roll from its pan. It trails syrupy hot brown filaments. When the customer decides on the roll, the server puts it on a plate and applies a spiral of white sugar glaze from a squeeze bottle.

Selecting meat is the climax of the progress down the line. The meat station is especially bright and noisy. Smells of different gravies crowd the air. Curtains of steam rise up, clouding some servers' eyeglasses. Here the servers stand elbow to elbow behind a dozen entrées, reeling off choices.

"Hot sauce or tartar?"

"Cherry sauce or yams?"

"White meat or dark meat? An extra thigh, perhaps?"

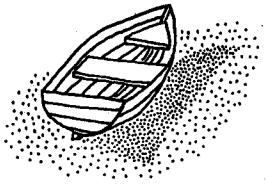
"How about some gravy?"

"Brown gravy or cream gravy?"

"Would you like mushrooms with your steak?"

Once the hot entrées are on the plates, people are eager to get to their tables and eat, so the vegetable station, the last significant stop, functions at double speed. A huge chunk of cauliflower vanishes beneath yellow cheese sauce. Mashed potatoes—real ones, peeled on the premises and veined with melted butter—are scooped from their tray with an ice-cream dipper.

With only a few exceptions—peas, carrot slices (hand-cut), green beans (canned)—every vegetable is embellished. The fashionable culinary virtue of simplicity does not apply at the vegetable station in a cafeteria. Vegetables are where cafeteria cooks traditionally strut their fancy stuff. Kale greens, overcooked in the Southern manner, are laced with bacon, and, in a Laughner's version of a classic convenience casserole, green beans are mixed with condensed mushroom soup, slivered almonds, and fried onion rings. Sweet potatoes are given a glaze of sugar, cinnamon, margarine, and cornstarch. Some baked potatoes are stuffed with broccoli and smothered in the same cheese sauce that is used for cauliflower. Caldrons of sauce and various gravies are available for all vegetables as well as for meats.



After vegetables are the beverages and such items as lemon wedges for fish, little paper cups of honey butter, packets of cream, pats of butter, and mini-tubs of margarine. At the end of the straight line are two cashiers. The average price of a Laughner's Sunday dinner is four dollars and fifty cents.

The dining rooms are baronial. Diners sit on broad upholstered chairs beneath tiered pewter chandeliers hanging from a plaster-and-oak-beam ceiling. Sunlight filters through panes of red, blue, and yellow leaded glass set in stately windows. The exuberant noise of a cafeteria mealtime is muted by heavy Axminster carpeting—a wine-red Oriental pattern to which Laughner's has exclusive commercial rights.

Tudor is the look for which all Laughner's dining rooms are known, but every branch has its own knick-knacks and decorative motifs, to give it an individual character. "Hope Shines from Here," says the coat of arms on the door of a Laughner's on Thirty-eighth Street in Indianapolis, where the stained-glass windows and the art on the walls have a Dutch motif. The stained-glass windows at the Southern Plaza branch, celebrating different modes of transportation, were taken from a defunct restaurant in the Indianapolis bus station. At Franklin Road, the motif is mostly eighteenth-century English.

The Tudor theme is impressive, but it is tempered with enough familiar cues to evoke the comforts of a gracious Midwestern home. Every dining room is equipped with a three-shelf hospitality hutch, from which customers take bottled condiments and refills of coffee or iced tea. The top shelf is always reserved for a display of china, model ships, or small classical busts. A glass-fronted corner cabinet in one dining room holds blue flow-ware dishes and a small collection of sugar bowls and creamers, pitchers, and leather-bound books. Another dining room may display ladies' hats from the nineteenth century, or a spray of dried flowers in a woven basket and a silver duck decoy.

The walls of every Laughner's are hung with original art, some of which was acquired at country auctions and flea markets and some of which was commissioned: oils in elaborate gilt frames, watercolors, pen-and-ink drawings. Portraits range from stern Old World aristocrats with Vandyke beards to windswept milkmaids and saucy wenches in modest dishabille. There are windmills, storms at sea, thatched-roof farmhouses, eighteenth-century European city streets, romantic visions of castle walls and cobblestone bridges. There are no contemporary or topical scenes; the art evokes earlier times and other worlds.

A HUNDRED years ago, Laughner's was part of a restaurant revolution that no one noticed. Most accounts of gastronomy in the late nineteenth century describe the period as a golden age of luxury dining. The focus is New York, where Delmonico's and Louis Sherry's restaurants were catercorner rivals at Fifth Avenue and Forty-fourth Street. The Waldorf dining room was overseen by Oscar Tschirky, among whose contributions

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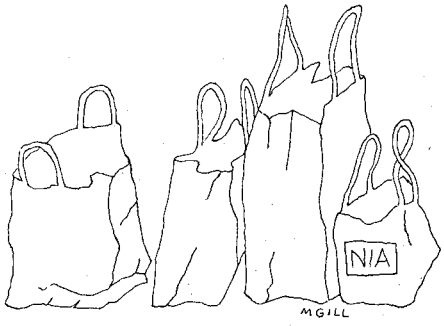
to food history was the use of a velvet rope to hold waiting customers at bay. The nouveaux riches staged parties such as the Swan Banquet, given by Edward Luckmeyer, at which seventy-two guests were seated around a table holding an indoor lake with trees, hills, valleys, bubbling fountains, and four live swans—the whole scene topped off with trilling canaries in gold cages built by Louis Tiffany.

In cities of the East and the Midwest, the industrial bonanza that supplied bons vivants with money to spend on lobster Newburgh was also generating a new class of workers—shopgirls, skilled tradesmen, office clerks—who thought of themselves as standing a rung above the common laborer and his lunch pail, and being too refined for free lunch in saloons (which anyway were for men only). Where were polite men and women of modest means to dine? The answer was the cafeteria—a new class of restaurant which was too mundane to have a place in any of the breathless accounts (contemporary or historical) of the era's profligacy. Cafeterias filled a need for respectable, inexpensive meals served fast.

The idea of a good, quick meal was pioneered by Fred Harvey, a freight agent for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy line, who lived in Kansas and set up a chain of Harvey Houses in railroad stations on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe route, beginning in 1876. Street diners, which were descended from horse-drawn lunch-wagons, evolved at the same time; the first one appeared in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1872, and sold boiled eggs, sliced chicken, and what was billed as a "chewed sandwich" of chopped-up cutting-board scraps to a clientele of both blue-collar and white-collar workers. These cafés were cheap and fast, and—equally important—they were reputable. In New York, the Church Temperance Society ran eight of them as alternatives to eating in saloons.

Indianapolis needed this kind of restaurant. By the end of the nineteenth century, the city was the hub of the lower Midwest, with a bigger automobile industry than Detroit and an inter-urban train-and-trolley system that made it easy for people in the surrounding area to come to town. There were few elegant places to eat (wealthy Indianapolans splurged in Chicago), but saloons, taverns (which welcomed women as well as men), and lunch counters were increasing rapidly. "It was a treat to ride into Indianapolis if you lived in an outlying small town," Lee Scott Theisen, the executive director of the Indiana State Museum, in Indianapolis, says. "Indiana was the California of the day—a swing state politically and an important literary center as well, thanks to Dreiser and Lew Wallace. In that context, Laughner's was no small-town café. It was a significant restaurant, near the street-car terminal, at the center of an industrial-political vortex."

William Jonathan Wesley Laughner, the patriarch of the chain, was born in 1862; he grew up on a farm in Whitestown, Indiana, but learned about shopkeeping from his father, who ran a country store adjacent to the farm. Young Laughner accompanied his father in a horse-drawn cart to sell produce between Whitestown and Indianapolis. When he was in his teens, he sold sandwiches and fudge from his own lunchwagon at mid-Indiana fairs and in city parks; then, in 1888, he opened the Boston Confectionery in Indianapolis. The bill of fare soon expanded beyond candy to sandwiches and sodas, and around 1900 the confectionery was remodelled, and renamed Laughner's Dairy Lunch. It was a restaurant with an unusual style of service. Customers presented themselves at a counter on which stood glass cases full of pastry and pans of food kept hot on a steam table; they told the server what they wanted, and then carried their plates to wooden chairs with sidearm tables. (As more self-service restaurants adopted individual sidearm tables during the next few years, they were nicknamed "one-arm lunches.") There were no trays or tray rails yet, but Laughner had hit upon an efficient, eye-appealing style of service. His restaurant provided one of the first examples of cafeteria dining in the Midwest. No gustatory logic explains why he called his business a dairy lunch: milk was not yet considered especially nutritious, nor is it likely that Laughner, a German Lutheran, would have deliberately associated his lunchroom with *milchig* kosher food. But the first "dairy lunchroom" had been established in 1884, in Chicago, and the term had come to imply quick food, low prices, and chairs with sidearm tables.



Laughner's Dairy Lunch was genteel. Although customers carried their own plates, they did not help themselves from the serving trays—the staff handed out the food. Valet parking was available in the person of Claude Laughner, Jonathan Wesley's son: he held the horses' reins while the riders went inside to eat. Like Schrafft's restaurants, which began opening in the East in 1906 (they were also descended from a candy business), the Dairy Lunch catered to a respectable clientele by serving wholesome food—in this case, Indiana specialties, such as chicken and dumplings, roast pork with dressing, ham and beans, and "pocketbook rolls," Laughner's flour-dusted version of folded-over Parker House rolls.

Cafeteria service suited fast-paced city life. Fifteen years before Laughner's introduced such service to the Midwest, the Exchange Buffet, in downtown New York, started selling food from a counter, but there the diners, all male, filled their own plates and ate standing up. Eight years later, the Klio Association, a Chicago social organization, started a self-service lunchroom called the Noon Day Rest, and that same year, also in Chicago, an entrepreneur named John Kruger, anticipating crowds at the Columbian Exposition, opened a self-service restaurant modelled on establishments he had seen while travelling in Sweden. Thinking the name *smörgåsbord* too odd, he chose *cafetería*, a Spanish word meaning "coffee shop." Within the next two years, the Chicago City Directory listed four cafeterias. As at the Exchange Buffet, customers took their own food. In 1904, *The Restaurant Bulletin* described these new restaurants as " 'grab joints,' where heaven helps those who help themselves," and said, "Men and women hugging roast beef to their bosoms and balancing a toppling armful of dishes rush to and fro, on a perilous and exciting exploration for seats."

New York had its first cafeteria by

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1898. The Childs brothers, already successful with a chain of nine modest-priced restaurants, transformed a lunchroom at 130 Broadway into a self-service lunch counter that featured an important innovation: trays on which customers could help themselves to many different dishes.

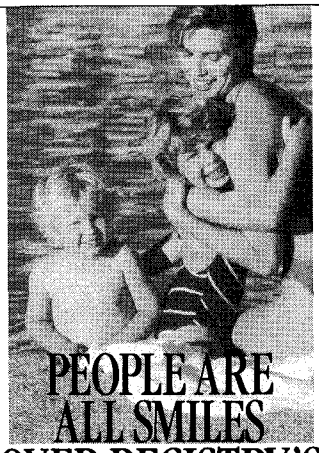
In 1902, two Philadelphians, Joseph Horn and Frank Hardart, imported fixtures and equipment from Germany that were meant to duplicate the success of a Swedish invention that allowed patrons to view food behind a small window, drop coins in a slot, turn a handle, and open the door of a compartment to get what they wanted. The Quisisana Company Automat, known as the waiterless restaurant, had been a great fad in Berlin, especially among women and young people—exactly the customers that America's new quick-service restaurants sought to attract. Horn and Hardart streamlined the system (the German version sent food up to the windows from basement kitchens on small elevators) and supplemented the window service with a steam table and a cafeteria line.

When a Michigan woman named Helen Mosher opened the first cafeteria on the West Coast—in Los Angeles, in 1905—the novelty of women cooks and self-service made it an immediate success. Inspired by Mrs. Mosher, four brothers, Horace, John, Cyrus, and Henry Boos, opened a cafeteria in Los Angeles in 1906. By 1920, the Boos Brothers had a chain of seven that served twenty-five thousand meals a day. Some humorists referred to Los Angeles as "the capital of Southern Cafeteria;" self-service became so closely identified with the West Coast that cafeterias were known in the East as "California-style" restaurants. A 1924 New York *Times* story about the cafeteria phenomenon credited Californians with inventing them.

It is easy to see why all these innovations appealed to restaurateurs: professional waiters weren't needed, and kitchen staffs were minimal. The economic logic is described by Harvey Levenstein in his book "Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet"—an analysis of how dining and dining-out customs changed between 1880 and 1930. He has mentioned quick-lunch restaurants as examples of something that was happening "in all fields in the late 19th and early 20th century: the reduction of labor costs by adopting processes that don't require skill." He adds, "It wasn't only a matter of cost; the issue was power. A skilled chef controls your kitchen." Levenstein tells what happened at Chicago's North American Restaurant in 1920. When its employees struck, they were fired, and within ten hours the dining room had been converted into a self-service cafeteria. Advertisements for its new way of doing things were headed "Common Sense Is on the Job," and described waiter service as "a useless luxury." At the National Hotel Exposition in New York in 1927, a new kind of waiterless system was displayed. Customers sat at tables where they filled out order blanks for themselves and dropped them in slots. A panel in each table opened and bowls of soup rose up from below. When the empty soup bowls were replaced, they descended and the next course was levitated, and so on—up to and including finger bowls. There were no waiters, no tipping, no wasted time.

Cafeterias were a boon to anyone who was paid by the hour. Neither idle rich nor indolent poor, these new restaurantgoers were people for whom time was money, and both time and money were to be budgeted. "Short lunch hours and expanding cities made going home for lunch impossible," Levenstein notes. "Office and shop employees couldn't take an hour and a half for lunch. They had one hour to punch in and out." During the First World War, expanding factory production drew even more people to the cities, and cafeterias proliferated. Laughner's Dairy Lunch served meals twenty-four hours a day through the war years.

It wasn't only speed that made cafeterias popular. They felt democratic. They embodied "the distinctly western idea of each man his own servant," wrote Guy Gundaker, of Kugler's Restaurant, in Philadelphia. "The cowboy, miner, or lumberman, returning to his habitation at night hungry, took his tin cup, plate, knife, fork, and spoon to the cook and received his meal much after the fashion of cafeterias." Even when cafeterias became elaborate and began to offer a great



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variety of food, they always specialized in meals stripped of folderol: no interaction with servers, no delays between courses, no tipping. All that is still true. Today, families having Sunday dinner at Laughner's occupy tables an average of forty-five minutes per seating.

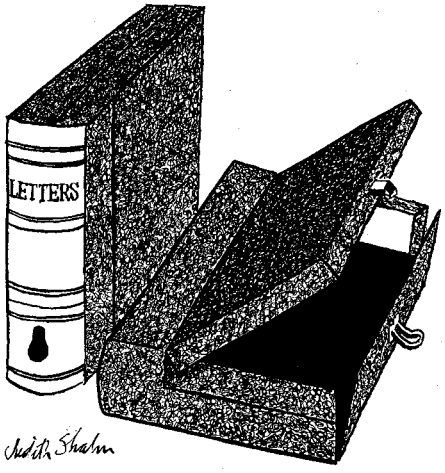
And cafeterias connoted cleanliness. Newly aware of the existence of bacteria, people in the late nineteenth century were obsessed with the possibility of contamination. Fear of microbes gave self-service a healthy cachet, because the food was out in the open, available for inspection, away from sneezy back-room kitchen help. (The Automat went a step further by offering food that appeared to be untouched by human hands.) Levenstein points to the introduction of enamelled tabletops, electric lights, and steel utensils as other ways in which new restaurants emphasized cleanliness. The Childs chain was known less for what it served than for its immaculate tile interiors and a staff outfitted in starched white uniforms. Some time after Laughner's started serving meals, its wooden sidearm seats were given porcelain tops, and still later marble tables were added to the dining room. Photographs show all the male employees clean-shaven, and even the dishwashers wearing white aprons and neckties. "Everything was clean," recalls Jonathan Wesley Laughner's granddaughter Frances Laughner Tierney, who recently retired from the business. "When I think of the Dairy Lunch, I remember nothing but white."

PROHIBITION had a tremendous effect on American restaurants. There were no more corner saloons to offer free lunch. Life at the top was gloomy, too. "The Story of Louis Sherry," by Edward Hungerford, published in 1929, laments the end of a culinary era: "Twenty glorious years. . . . Then came Prohibition—that deadening statute that made good lunching and good dining so very, very difficult indeed." All across the country, elegant dining rooms—even the ninety-six-year-old Delmonico's—closed.

The epicurean view of Prohibition is that it was a disaster, the end of hope that a fine cuisine might evolve from the Francophile splurge of La Belle Époque. For everyday Americans, however, who patronized restaurants of a social level between beer joints and the Waldorf, Prohibition was the dawn of an amazing era. "The most remarkable growth of the restaurant industry . . . has been since 1919," the magazine *American Restaurant* observed in 1932. "Up to that time, it was only in the high-class restaurants that much thought and attention was given to the quality of food served . . . However, after the enactment of the eighteenth amendment the men who had depended on liquor for their profits discovered that they had been blind to a new trend."

Cafeterias were in their heyday. "Over half a million spent here in equipment and atmosphere," said *American Restaurant*, showing pictures of a new cafeteria that looks like the lobby of one of the grandest nineteen-twenties movie palaces with tables and chairs set up in it. Crystal chandeliers hang from a beamed and elaborately painted ceiling. A pair of curving stairways sweep up to an arched portal in the mezzanine, which leads to a balcony rimmed by a filigreed rail. The S. & W. Cafeteria, which opened in Asheville, North Carolina, in 1929, dazzled customers with a Byzantine façade painted buff, bronze, black, green, and gold and, inside, terra-cotta walls in three shades of buff, a multicolored terrazzo floor, and bronze and wrought-iron lighting fixtures.

"Tea Room and Cafeteria Management," a 1926 how-to book for restaurateurs, suggests old-fashioned décor as a means of attracting customers to what the author, R. N. Elliott, calls "a convincing atmosphere of by-gone cleanliness, peace and almost cloistered charm." Cautioning those proprietors who think their only duty is to furnish food, Elliott asks, "How often have we heard the expression 'I'd rather eat bread and butter in nice surroundings than a square meal where there is no refinement'?" To portray refinement, he conjures up an eating environment amazingly similar to the Laughners' Tudor look today: "Tiny lead-framed panes of glass in the windows entice the mind back to the halcyon days of 'Merrie England,' when befrilled gallants inscribed their love for 'ladyes faire' in diamond-cut protestations on window panes in ivy-covered, battlemented castles." Elliott also recommends giving restaurants the surname of their owner, citing Schrafft's, Childs, and Ritz-Carlton as successful examples.



The Boos Brothers opened a cafeteria in San Francisco, at 725 Market Street, that featured panoramic paintings on the walls. The scenes bore such titles as "Pioneers of the Golden West," "Early Days in San Francisco," and "Landing of First White Men in California." According to William Francis Ireland, the secretary of the Los Angeles Café and Restaurant Keepers' Protective Association, writing in 1920, the Boos Brothers' use of art elevated the restaurant above the status of mere eating place by "presenting to the mind of the patron historical facts," and "attracting his mind away from the commercial affairs of life."

The fanciest self-service restaurants were Horn & Hardart's Automats. Early Automats in Philadelphia and downtown New York had offered the bare, hygienically reassuring look of tile floors and marble counters. In 1912, at Broadway and Forty-sixth Street, the biggest Automat opened, with a whole new look, supplementing lunchroom simplicity with Gothic flourishes such as gargoyles, and a column in the center of the room crusted with relief carvings of vines and fruits growing up onto the ceiling. It was a great success. Automat restaurants and takeout stores opened all over New York and Philadelphia (advertised by the slogan "Less Work for Mother"). During the twenties, machine-age modernity became their trademark look: chrome; silver dolphin-headed spigots for the famous coffee; Carrara marble; and rows of bright-windowed cubbyholes.

In many of the sumptuous new cafeterias, the splendor of the edifice was accompanied by increased pomp. The most ambitious ones were still built

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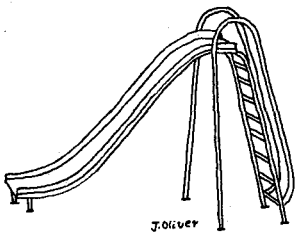
around the efficient principle of the straight-line counter, but they supplemented it with hostesses, white tablecloths, candlelight, good china, and silver-plated utensils (rather than cheap lunchroom flatware). Even the most modest establishments ought to provide their cashier with a push button to summon busboys, advised "Tea Room and Cafeteria Management." The cashier "should make it a point to say at least 'thank you' to the customers as they pay their checks—and this not perfunctorily but sincerely." J. A. Morrison, a restaurateur in Mobile, Alabama, opening his first cafeteria, in September of 1920, overcame what he believed to be Southerners' objections to serving themselves by providing waiters to carry trays from the service counter to the table—an amenity that still prevails in the South.



By mid-1924, there were nearly a thousand cafeterias in New York. Greenwich Village had some that attracted avant-garde types by offering art exhibits, jazz recitals, and poetry readings. Midtown cafeterias featured thick rugs (the ones in the Village had bare floors), attendants to refill water glasses and sugar bowls, and even chamber groups to provide dinner music. Alice Wright Penrose, who gave a class in cafeteria management at the Y.W.C.A., observed that "the policy of pleasing the eye goes further than the mere work of beautifying food," and explained, "The room itself must be pleasing, clean, attractive, with delicate colored curtains at the windows, and perhaps candles to match on the tables. . . . In this way the cafeteria is made not only a restaurant for persons of moderate means, but an attractive luncheon, tea, and dining room for those of the most fastidious taste." Some uptown cafeterias were known for mahogany walls and crystal candelabras.

Yet even those places with linen napery never attempted to serve fancy food; nor did the Moorish, Mediterranean, or Egyptian-style ones express any culinary wanderlust in the contents of their steam tables. On the contrary. Like the Automat, which was known for such down-home victuals as baked beans, fish cakes, chowder, and pie, the mission of cafeterias—however grand they looked—was to supply customers with simple meals: chicken à la king, chipped beef, croquettes, white cake. Bland was good, for garlic and spices were still considered marks of unassimilated (and therefore inferior) immigrant cooking. "Cafeteria Recipes," a cookbook published by the Y.W.C.A. in 1925, is a paean to mildness; one recipe is for spaghetti with nothing but tomato purée, and with only salt, pepper, and sugar for seasoning.

In Indianapolis, a second generation of Laughners branched out from the Dairy Lunch to open the Central Cafeteria. Jonathan Wesley Laughner's son Claude had met his future wife, Flora, when she applied for a job as a chocolate dipper in the back of J.W.'s confectionery. So enamored was she of Claude that she serenaded him while they made candy; they married, worked together in the lunchroom and in the family concession business, and opened their cafeteria in 1920. The Central Cafeteria was up to date. It featured trays and a tray rail; and, recognizing the new fashion for eye appeal as cafeterias' strong suit, Claude installed a spectacularly big front window, in which he could display appetizing fruit. Here lay bouquets of watermelons and pineapples, and, especially, huge bunches of bananas. At the time, bananas were considered so exotic that "From the Tropics to Your Table," a pamphlet of recipes published by the Fruit Dispatch Company in 1926, began by advising readers that it was necessary to peel them before cooking. The pamphlet also revealed the connotations of health, success, and adventure in Claude's windowful of bananas: "Nature has made the ripe banana one of the most wholesome and digestible of foods. Man has put the banana within the reach of every American. The romance of banana cultivation is one of the most interesting in the history of American business."

The interior of Laughner's Central Cafeteria outdid the clean-and-white theme of the Dairy Lunch. Walls were of white ceramic tile; tabletops were of white porcelain; each bentwood chair was covered with a white slipcover. Frances Tierney recalls that Matthew, the black porter at the Central, wore

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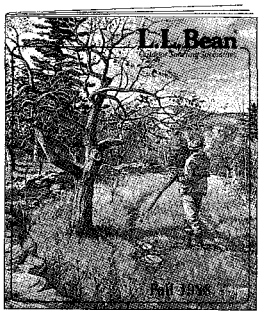

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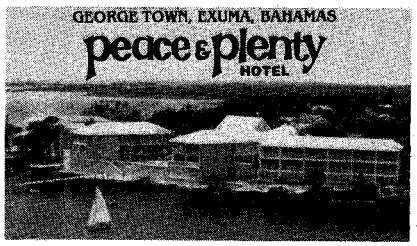

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starched white clothes from head to toe: jacket, shirt, pants, and apron.

Booming business during the nineteen-twenties encouraged the Laughner family to open another kind of restaurant, the Ripple Grill & Tearoom. The grill section, in front, was done in the sanitary tile-and-porcelain style, its menu was a plain one of sandwiches and plate lunch, and, for people in a hurry, car-hop service was available. To get from the grill section to the tearoom, one passed through a portal flanked by large *torchères*. Like cafeterias, tearooms were beneficiaries of Prohibition. Once known as ladies' places, they began appealing to men, too, with what *American Restaurant* called "the homelike touch of their surroundings" and "better-rounded meals." Laughner's Ripple Tearoom was homelike only in the way Laughner cafeterias are homelike today: far more thematic than most people's homes but with a distinct personal touch. The floor was carpeted. Lights were low. There were thick linens on the tables. And there were frogs' legs on the menu.

As the eating-out boom peaked in cities of the East, the Midwest, and the West Coast—the number of American restaurants tripled during the twenties—cafeterias were appearing in the Deep South. This was a turning point in cafeteria history: the South became, in the words of the magazine *Institutions*, "cafeteria country."

The first of the Southern cafeterias was Britling's, established in 1918 by A. W. B. Johnson I, the proprietor of a Birmingham department store. Responding to customers' complaints that there was no nice place to eat downtown, Johnson opened a cafeteria on the top floor of his store. (He chose the name Britling from a favorite H. G. Wells book, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through.") His son A. W. Boswell Johnson has recalled, "Pretty soon the escalators were so crowded carrying diners to the cafeteria that there was no room for customers. So my father opened a large cafeteria across the street."

Soon there were other cafeteria chains in the South—like Morrison's, which began in 1920, in Mobile, and quickly expanded to seven other towns and cities. These cafeterias were an immediate success, for they offered a plenitude of family fare appealing to Southerners raised on such feasts as fish fries, barbecues, community suppers, and oyster roasts. Another reason for the success of cafeterias in the South during Prohibition was their moral character. Unlike service restaurants and hotel dining rooms, where liquor had been served (and often continued to be, illegally), cafeterias had clean reputations. Just as lunch counters had reassured the germ-conscious customers of the early nineteen-hundreds, the cafeterias' brightly lit dining rooms appeared upright to abstainers in the Bible Belt. And they still have a reputation as "family restaurants," in which drinking doesn't fit. Virtually no cafeteria serves hard liquor, although recently a few have begun to offer wine.

As Prohibition tried to enforce morality throughout the country, Indianapolis went on a crusade of its own to stay racially pure and all-American. Out of fear that the growing auto industry might attract Eastern Europeans and Southern blacks, factories were denied zoning variances, but Detroit was happy to offer them, so business moved north. The temper of central Indiana was demonstrated by a 1923 Ku Klux Klan rally in Kokomo, attended by a hundred thousand Klansmen. "Indianapolis in the 1920s was anti-immigrant, anti-colored, and anti-change," Lee Scott Theisen, of the Indiana State Museum, says. "It was a city that did not want to grow."

Stunted growth shaped Indianapolis cuisine, and even today the city's restaurants offer little in the way of ethnic food; it is a meat-and-potatoes place. To some extent, its jingoistic Americanism had the same effect as the big food fad of the nineteen-twenties: the belief in vitamins. Scientific eating and a sparse diet were considered the true road to health by advocates of what Harvey Levenstein calls the Newer Nutrition. In restaurants, the widely accepted belief in prudent eating translated into a resurgence of plain and familiar American food. French cuisine, considered too rich and heavy to be healthful, vanished from all but the most pretentious hotel dining rooms. This drastic simplification was soon abetted by the forced economies of the Depression. Laughner's Ripple Tearoom was closed in 1930. The Laughner family was permanently out of the frogs'-leg end of the restaurant business.

Because most cafeterias were a relative bargain (in 1935, Morrison's offered a roast-beef-and-potato plate for eighteen cents), they survived the Depression. But their glory days were over. Few new palaces were being built. (A conspicuous exception was Horn & Hardart's monumental pink stone streamliner on West Fifty-seventh Street, which opened in 1938.) In 1932, *American Restaurant* noted that "other types of restaurants have begun to meet the cafeteria's price challenge," and mentioned coffee shops, luncheonettes, and soda-fountain tearooms.

Cafeteria food seemed old-fashioned by the tenets of the Newer Nutrition. "A new day has dawned. We're learning now to eat to live," declared *Healthful Living*, a pamphlet published by John Harvey Kellogg's Battle Creek Food Company in the nineteen-twenties. "Everybody is asking, 'What shall I eat for good health, to make rich blood, strong muscles, a clean tongue, a clear head, a sweet breath, active bowels, plenty of pep and efficiency, and the fewest doctors' bills?' " The answer was *not* big hot meals in a cafeteria. Vitamins were what counted, and they could be found in things as simple as bread made with graham flour, or Kellogg's bran cereal and milk—available at any lunch counter.

Yet lunch-counter efficiency wasn't always what customers wanted during the hard days of the nineteen-thirties. For people with plenty of time but little money, cafeterias—most notably the Automat—offered bargains of legendary proportions, together with the niceties of prosperity. Those with no money at all found ways to take advan-

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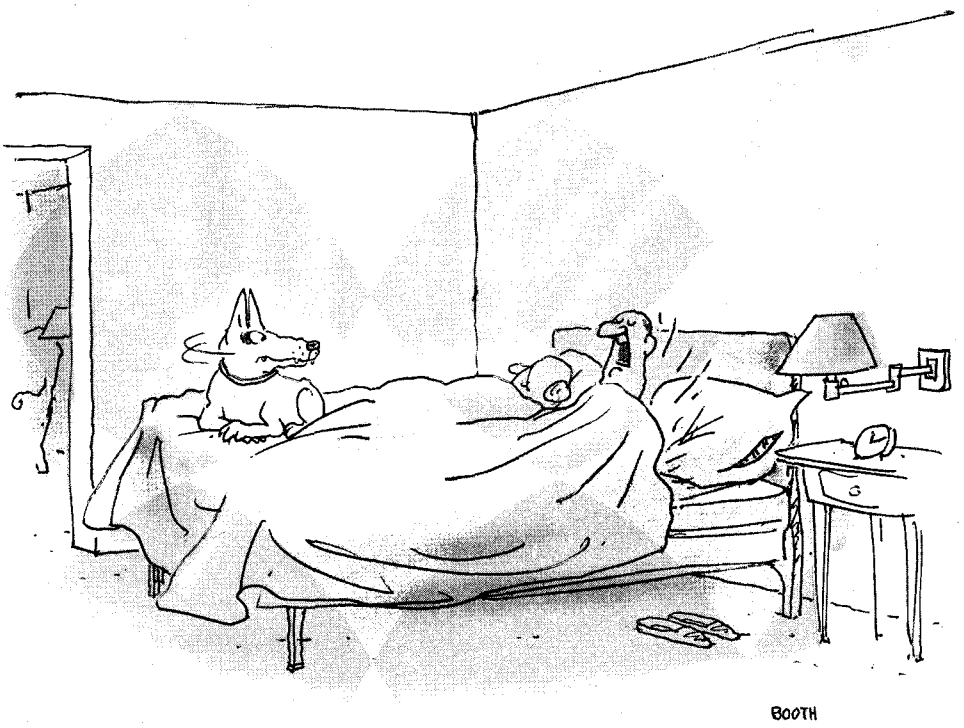
tage of the waiterless (and relatively unsupervised) cafeteria dining rooms: lemonade was made from sugar, ice water, and a handful of lemon wedges, and a popular recipe for Automat tomato soup was a mixture of ketchup, hot water, and a dash of pepper, all of which were free.

The Laughner family ran many cafeterias during the thirties, usually two or three at a time, in different parts of downtown Indianapolis, but what Claude and Flora's children—Lloyd, Frances, Richard, Charles, and Janet—remember best about the thirties is working the family's food concessions. Since 1912, Claude Laughner had been running stands at the State Fair, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and Riverside Amusement Park. "We worked the stands, we rode the rides free, and we slept on peanut sacks," Frances Tierney recalls. "We ate peanuts all day long, and we were the envy of other children." At the age of twelve, Lloyd managed his own stand at the west entrance of Riverside Park, and drove a Model T pickup truck to get soda pop to sell. "On a busy day, our hands would be numb from reaching down to get bottles from the ice tub," Frances says. There were a half-dozen stands at Riverside Park, and each had a different menu: a confectionery offered caramel corn and candied apples. Hot dogs and hamburgers could be had at the grill. One stand specialized in steins of homemade root beer, another in Claude Laughner's soft-custard pineapple whips and chocolate-dipped "polar clubs" (balls of ice cream on sticks). There were no freezers; ice and salt kept things cold. Riverside Park, incidentally, is where the first ice-shaving machine for making snow cones was installed, in 1925—invented by Frank Thomas, one of Laughner's competitors.

Charles and Frances speak fondly of another Depression-era family enterprise: house-to-house candy sales. "At the beginning of the winter, we loved to watch my father get out the candy kettle and the gloves," Frances recalls. "We kids went around to all the houses knocking on doors and taking orders, and later we took them their candy canes and candy baskets. That was our project every Christmas."

When they weren't selling candy door-to-door or manning concession stands, all five Laughner children worked in the family cafeterias as busboys and dishwashers. "My parents had five children who all started in the restaurant business," Frances says. "Our children are in the business now, too. Most of us met our wives and husbands working here. Restaurants are all we knew."



"Yes, I am interested in taking a fresh look at my holdings."

• •

THE cafeteria business had grown with the cities, and as people left the cities for the suburbs after the Second World War the cafeteria business shrank. Convenience cookery made the preparation of hot meals at home easier than ever ("The Can-Opener Cookbook" was published in 1952), and by the late nineteen-fifties fast food was becoming accessible to anybody with a car. Many cafeterias, stuck downtown in unwieldy facilities, began to seem institutional and charmless. "They were stainless-steel lunchrooms," Charles Laughner recalls with distaste. "Ordinary cafeterias. Not the kind of place where a modern family wanted to eat dinner."

"A lot of those companies up North and out West thought the cafeteria concept was dead," an executive of a Southern cafeteria chain said in a 1978 article in *Institutions* on why the self-service concept had disappeared from some regions of the country. It went on to point out that in the South the postwar years were great ones for cafeterias. Piccadilly, in Baton Rouge, Wyatt's, in Dallas, and Furr's, in Lubbock, Texas, expanded into multi-unit chains throughout the region.

The reason cafeterias have thrived in the South is the kind of food they serve. Southern-style vegetables such as turnip greens and yam casseroles sopped with Karo syrup are improved by long hours on a steam table. Furthermore, Southerners traditionally prefer a hot, sit-down plate lunch to a fast sandwich.

In this respect, Indianapolis is more Southern than Midwestern. Because of its history (its anti-industry stand in the nineteen-twenties), its geography (it is closer to Louisville than to Chicago), and its taste for fried chicken, embellished vegetables, and sweet pies, it seems much more like the Ohio River Valley than like the Great Lakes region.

In 1947, Morrison's, still a strictly Southern chain, wowed the restaurant industry with its remodelling of its old cafeteria in Tampa. Just as autos of the late forties proclaimed their modernity by being curvaceous, this model cafeteria was streamlined—low, lean, and slinky—and all the frills and flourishes of the twenties palaces were stripped away. The façade had no decoration except for a machined silver band that ran low (just above head level) and

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straight across the front, supporting a "Morrison's" in sans-serif letters. Interior columns were straight and square, without cornices; lights were recessed in the ceiling; tables were chrome-banded; and, most dashing of all, the straight line was replaced by a curving one, with customers rounding a bend of salads to get from pies to entrées. Morrison's looks back on it as "a showcase of unequalled beauty and modern technology," and others have called it "the Cafeteria of Tomorrow."

Morrison's got it right: you can still find plenty of cafeterias in the South that have the 1947 look of tomorrow. The more important postwar development, however, was not in design but in location. Small business looked to the suburbs for its future. "Look ahead with us," said "Opportunity Unlimited," a book issued by the Rexall company in 1946 and addressed "To you, Mr. Rexallite." The book predicted a new kind of place where people would soon be spending money: drive-in shopping centers. For many Southern cafeterias, including Morrison's, Piccadilly, and some of the big independents, shopping centers were where the future lay.

While Northern cafeterias were dying off and Southern ones were moving into shopping centers, Charles Laughner was looking at Win Schuler's restaurant, in Marshall, Michigan. In the nineteen-forties, Win Schuler had modernized his family's restaurant, giving it air-conditioning, a brand-new kitchen—all the amenities. But instead of going the Morrison's route, toward ultra-modernity, Schuler created heavily thematic dining rooms, including a Tudor one with overhead beams, a big fireplace, dark wood, and bric-a-brac of pewter and china. The room was called the Dickens Hearth.

When Charles Laughner first saw it, in the late nineteen-fifties, he was inspired. He and his two brothers had formed Laughner Brothers in 1957, and had begun planning a big move away from what Charles described as "just plain cafeterias" by opening up something innovative, on the south side of Indianapolis. All their cafeterias had so far been in storefronts, and that had meant parking problems at lunch and (for the downtown cafeterias) a diminishing clientele at dinner. So the Laughners leased a piece of land and designed their own building, surrounded by parking spaces, adjacent to the Southern Plaza shopping center.

A freestanding cafeteria was a strange way to go at a time when shopping centers seemed to represent the future; but even stranger in 1964 was the interior of the new cafeteria. All the food-service facilities were modern stainless steel, but the dining rooms were a grand-scale *hommage* to Win Schuler's Dickens Hearth. Charles, who was considered the artistic one of the Laughner children, had designed an environment startlingly unlike that of any cafeteria. What made it different wasn't just wood panelling, wall tapestries, pewter chandeliers, and stained-glass windows; after all, interior decoration was not a new concept in cafeterias. The difference lay in the sense of privacy in the dining rooms. The straight line was completely separated from the areas where people ate, so that when customers took their trays to a table they left all the stainless steel and the bright lights of the service counter behind. "I thought that people eating in a cafeteria deserve the same treatment as in a fine-dining restaurant," Charles Laughner says. "Mainly, that means privacy." The traditional décor and the genteel atmosphere were a great success. The look and the feel of Laughner's cafeterias for the next twenty-five years were established by Charles Laughner's design for the new, freestanding building at Southern Plaza.

Charles Laughner is the chief executive officer of Laughner Brothers. He is sixty-one years old, and has fine white hair, a neatly trimmed white mustache, blue eyes, and luminous pink skin. He looks well fed but temperate; the camber of his stomach is the only hint of a lifetime of eating in the family's restaurants. Laughner's regular business attire is a navy-blue blazer, tan slacks, a rep tie, and a starched white shirt, along with brown socks and brown brogues. He wears two pieces of gold jewelry: a tiny gold lapel pin that spells out "Laughner's," with a diamond for an apostrophe, and a Scottish Rite Masonic ring.

Laughner's office is one of a tight cluster of cubicles that constitute the company headquarters, above the Dutch Oven, a pie shop and café opened by Laughner Brothers in 1971. Next door is the cafeteria at Southern Plaza, which is now the oldest of all

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the Laughner's restaurants. There are two ways to get up to the offices: by a showy wrought-iron spiral staircase in the Dutch Oven lobby or up back stairs past a makeshift storage area and perhaps a huddle of employees smoking cigarettes. No smoking is allowed in the office, and although Charles established a thousand-dollar reward for any employee who quits for six months, there are still a few holdouts.

He shares an office with Richard Tierney, forty-eight, who is his sister Frances's son and his second-in-command. It is the corner office, and is bigger than any of the others crowded onto the second floor, but it seems small—perhaps because of all its furniture and decoration. At opposite sides of the room are two hulking desks, and all around the desks are wing chairs upholstered in blue or maroon leather with brass studs. The walls are covered with foam-and-plaster friezes tinted to look like mahogany. A stained-glass rooster perches on the mantel above a fireplace.

Charles doesn't spend much time at his desk. If visitors arrive at 9:50 A.M. for a ten-o'clock meeting, they find him at a table down in the Dutch Oven, conferring with its manager, Howard Bostick, and drinking the usual—half a cup of coffee mixed with half a cup of hot water. Later that day, he eats lunch at the Dutch Oven, and he has dinner at a new cafeteria in Castleton. "In my whole life, I've probably eaten a total of one year at home," he says, recalling that as a child he would eat breakfast at his mother's cafeteria, go to school, take a trolley to the cafeteria for lunch, return to school, and go back to the cafeteria for dinner.

When Charles was young, he wanted no part of the food-service business. At age nineteen, he got a job as a vault setter for a crypt company in Indianapolis. "They used to call me Digger, but I didn't do that," he says. His job was delivering air-lock burial vaults. The allure of the crypt company was the money it paid—a hundred dollars a week. Working at his mother's cafeteria, Charles had been earning thirty. He didn't stay away long. "I guess restaurants are in my blood," he says, referring to his early education in mopping floors, washing dishes, busing tables, helping the cooks, and working the concessions at Riverside Park. His parents were divorced in 1939, and a year later his mother opened her own cafeteria; although he lived with his mother, he learned from both. "My father was the better businessman, and my mother was the better cook," he says. Other relatives describe his father, Claude, as whimsical and artistic, and his mother, Flora, as being obsessed with the quality of the food.

In the late nineteen-forties, Flora retired, and her oldest son, Lloyd, took over her cafeteria. In 1950, Charles was persuaded by his mother to return to the family trade, and open another cafeteria, on the west side of Indianapolis. "I took a cut from a hundred dollars a week to fifty to get back in the business," Charles says, with no explanation other than a bemused shrug and the quiet remark "That's what we Laughners do."

In 1953, Charles had an idea—one of many good ideas he has had before their time. He and a partner, William Lesher, opened a drive-in hamburger restaurant called Laughner's Drive-Inn, billed as "home of the DOUBLE-L sandwich—made as only we know how." The DOUBLE-L was a forerunner of the Big Mac—two ground-beef patties, lettuce, cheese, a special sauce, and mayonnaise on a toasted double-deck sesame-seed bun, for forty-five cents. The drive-in's menu was not as streamlined as McDonald's (which began franchising, in Des Plaines, Illinois, in 1955); entrées ranged from a "chilled pineapple and dairy-fresh cottage cheese salad" (sixty cents) to a pork-tenderloin-steak dinner with French fries, head lettuce with French dressing, and a toasted buttered bun (a dollar-fifty). There were also desserts, including ice-cream nut balls, hot-fudge cake, and Persian-nut sundaes (thirty-five cents each).

The back of the menu shows pictures of Charles Laughner and William Lesher. Both men have short hair and wear big-shouldered jackets. Between their pictures, the house policy is spelled out: "The management and personnel of this organization are interested in maintaining the highest quality food and the finest service. We constantly strive to better our service to you. If at anytime you have any suggestions or criticisms, we will be happy to hear from you." Four years after the drive-in opened, Charles sold his interest in it to his partner.

Charles Laughner feels no nostalgia for the fifties. He is puzzled by the romantic ideas that people have about the time, and by the revival of fifties-style diners. "I did not like the fifties," he says. "Maybe it's because I was struggling so much then." In 1959, a second drive-in was opened—Laughner's Steer-Inn—but it didn't last long, either. "They were contemporary restaurants," Charles explains. "I never felt comfortable with that kind of place." He tells the story of a Laughner's cafeteria that he and his brothers opened. (By the late fifties, there were four Laughner Brothers cafeterias.) It had two contemporary dining rooms and one traditional one, which was always the first to fill up with customers. "I learned a lesson there," Charles concludes. "Tradition—that is the safety zone."

Of the three Laughner brothers, Lloyd (now retired) is described by nephews as a "people person," whose forte is employee relations; Richard, the second-oldest, excels at day-to-day management, while Charles is seen as the family visionary—a kind of Renaissance man, who brought the Laughner heritage to fruition in the distinct style of today's cafeterias. In the late nineteen-fifties, after selling his share of the drive-in business, he took time to travel and get ideas by looking at other restaurants. He concluded that the Laughners had to break away from the image of cafeterias as "sterile and utilitarian," so the brothers decided to give the business a new look. The freestanding cafeteria at Southern Plaza was his opportunity. "I designed the building and found an architect to do what I wanted," he says.

Mismatched chairs in the dining rooms were Charles's idea. They provide everybody with a favorite type of seat (armchair, wooden back, upholstered back), and the variety is less institutional-looking than matched chairs would be. With his wife, Pat, Charles bought or commissioned all the art for the walls and scouted auctions every weekend to find the bric-a-brac that would give the restaurants

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what he calls "the fine-dining look." He chose the wallpaper, and found the carpet pattern that became a familiar part of the Laughner's design.

Charles Laughner sees himself as the idea man; he is also a fanatic about details. Barbara Hopkins, who now does public relations for Laughner's, was originally commissioned by Charles as an artist, because of her training at the Herron School of Art, in Indianapolis. She recently described some of the jobs he assigned her. "He wanted the trim on each menu blackboard in each cafeteria to be hand-painted to match the Victorian wallpaper—which is a different pattern in each place," she said. "I nearly went blind painting them. He thought it would be nice for the front door at the Thirty-eighth Street location to have a stained-glass Laughner coat of arms, so I designed one with little figures on top holding plates. At one location, he didn't like the shingled roof—he thought the color was too harsh. So we sprayed the whole thing with an opaque stain to tone it down. He wanted an antique brass coatrack in one of the lobbies to be trimmed with eucalyptus, and he wanted a basket of dried flowers in every store. One time, I took it upon myself to move a vase from one shelf to another. Charles noticed. He called me the next day and asked why." Barbara's watercolors hang on many of the cafeteria walls. She likes to point out one that she painted when she was mad at Charles for being so demanding. It is a street scene that includes a tiny shop sign: "Old Laughnerhead."

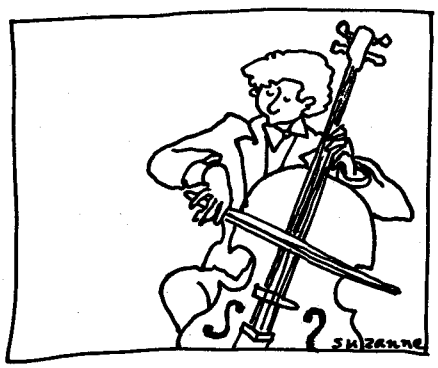
No aspect of the business escapes Charles's scrutiny. Last year, he outfitted all the rest rooms with Hygolets—a Swiss invention advertised as "the first major toilet seat innovation in nearly a century." A Hygolet is a sanitary device that at the push of a button sends a fresh plastic slipcover scooting around the toilet seat. Laughner's was the first company in Indiana to buy these things. Unfortunately, some children like to push the button just to see the plastic slink around the seat, which wears out the batteries, but Charles is convinced of their hygienic value. "It is our business to protect customers' health," he says. For the same reason, Laughner's has never used a help-yourself salad bar. "Too many people touch the food," Charles explains. "It's like shaking hands with a thousand people, then sitting down to eat."

Charles is rarely off duty. Pat says, "When you go out to dinner with him, he never stops looking around. Sometimes when we travel we will be in a restaurant and I'll think I'm eating a good meal. But then he tells me I'm not. This man does not turn off."

Charles Laughner spends a lot of time watching customers eat. In the nineteen-sixties, Laughner's tried using instant mashed potatoes, but went back to peeling and mashing their own after Charles watched the faces of people as they tasted the substitute. "I could see they weren't enjoying them the way mashed potatoes ought to be enjoyed," he says.

"How do you like this sugar-cream pie?" he asks a guest at a cafeteria table, referring to the Indiana farmhouse classic, which is made from a basic recipe of sugar, cream, flour, and shortening. The guest says it's fine. "On a scale of ten, I give it six," Charles says, with no frivolity in his voice. He lifts the plate close to study what most people would consider a lovely wedge of pie. "It should stand up high." He points to a slight concavity in the top of the custard-colored wedge. "If you make it right, you can almost get it to bulge." Then, like a judge at the State Fair, he begins a dissertation on what constitutes excellence in sugar-cream pie: "There is really no excuse. The difference in the look of the pie is in the way the cow eats. When she is eating grass, you cannot get the pie to rise. In the winter, when she is eating grain and corn, the cream is just right for getting that bulge." He summons the piemaker from the kitchen and hands him the sagging pie. "What happened here?" he asks, his very blue eyes focussed on the nervous employee. No excuse is offered. Charles orders sugar-cream pie removed from the day's menu.

Laughner's restaurants serve what Charles Laughner likes to eat—Midwestern square meals. "I could never see lobsters," he says. "All that work. I am that way about fish, too. I don't want the whole fish out there, with its eyes looking at me. I like mine filleted." He sweeps a hand toward a section of the line where neatly cut blocks of whitefish are lined up in a row, gilded with bread crumbs and margarine, and baked.



Usually, Charles's taste coincides with his customers', but not always. One day while he was driving between cafeterias with his son Chip, he got the idea of putting on the menu old-fashioned strawberry shortcake. Chip asked what that was, and Charles explained: a biscuit covered with crushed and sugared berries and topped with cream whipped barely thick enough to hold a peak. With visions of the classic strawberry shortcake in his head, he spent weeks with the kitchen staff perfecting a proper biscuit ("flaky, but with a bit of chew") and turning his idea into reality. Then he watched as customers slid their trays right past it, choosing pie instead. To his chagrin, Laughner's discontinued serving his kind of strawberry shortcake in favor of the kind made with yellow cake.

Charles Laughner's house, a big Tudor mansion, looks astonishingly like a Laughner's cafeteria. At the top of a long, steep driveway in an area known informally as Pill Hill (because many executives from the Eli Lilly pharmaceutical company have lived there), it overlooks the city from a point that Barbara Hopkins says is "one of the two highest in Indianapolis, along with the grave of James Whitcomb Riley."

The Great Room, where guests are served cocktails, is a platonic ideal of the Laughner vision: oak-beamed ceiling, the same Axminster carpet that is used in the restaurants, Flemish art, displays of polearms, knickknacks, and heavy, dark furniture. There is a luxurious red couch with gold tassels, a huge dark-blue leather lounge chair with a double-size matching ottoman, and a window seat piled with twelve of Pat Laughner's needlepoint pillows—one for each sign of the zodiac. The shelf for videocassettes looks like a casemate that King Arthur might have bolted to his castle wall.

Many paintings in the house are the work of the late Thad Miller, who did

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the Colonial couple (modelled by Chip and his first wife) at the Franklin Road location and various oil paintings in the other cafeterias. "Thad was not great at likenesses," Charles observes, pointing to a portrait of Chip at age thirteen with a horse. "He tended to make females look like males. And sometimes his feet and hands were too big. But this one is very good. I like his colors. They are similar to the Old Masters'."

Charles discovered Thad Miller when he read an article about the artist in a local newspaper in 1964. When he talks about their association, which lasted twenty years, he speaks with brotherly affection. "Thad didn't have to starve," Charles says. "He came from a rich family. But he wanted to suffer for his art. When I first sought him out in his studio and told him I would like him to paint thirty paintings, he nearly fell off his chair. He always said to me, 'Laughner, you have taught me discipline. You made me paint.' "

Over the capacious fireplace in the Great Room hangs an immense Brueghelesque canvas on which Hungarian maidens wrestle with ropes of red peppers. The house is full of art and of attic-sale treasures. In the stairwell leading to the second floor are three paintings that Charles and Pat bought from an old lady for seventy-five dollars: an eighteenth-century cameo and two landscapes, one of which is signed "Corot." Charles has been comparing the signature with those on Corots reproduced in an art book but has yet to be convinced of its authenticity. Another prize, on a balcony overlooking the Great Room, is a pastoral English scene with a cow, bought at a downtown flea market for ten dollars. Pat is still upset with Charles for his overenthusiastic cleaning of the painting, which partly erased the cow's stomach.

The Laughners' home kitchen has none of the Old World grandeur of the rest of the house. It is a bright model of suburban efficiency, seldom used for everyday meals but well equipped for those occasions when Pat makes Charles his favorite home-cooked dinner—country-fried steak and pan gravy—or when Charles develops a recipe. It was here that he created the Charlie Cheese, a popular low-cost sandwich of melted cheese, sliced onions, and green olives, and also Shrimp Charles—grilled Gulf shrimp wrapped in bacon with sweet-and-sour mustard sauce. He based this one on a dish he had eaten in a Chinese restaurant.

Pat Laughner is a slim, fashionably dressed woman. A diamond tennis bracelet dangles from one wrist. When a visitor compliments her on her outfit one day—a mid-calf-length skirt of muted paisley, a blouse with a silk ascot, and a snug-fitting jacket—she says that it was a present from Charles, and that she would never have bought anything so expensive for herself. "Pat is always complaining that Indianapolis doesn't have the expensive dresses she can get in Chicago," Charles says. "But I'll tell you something about her: she wouldn't buy them if she could." When he is asked about a large diamond in the center of his Masonic ring, he reddens, and says, "It was a gift from my stepfather. I would never buy such a ring for myself." He drives a silver Mercedes-Benz 450 SL; when someone admires it, he says that he bought it used and it now has a hundred and ninety-five thousand miles on the odometer.

Pat sometimes talks wistfully about the weekend expeditions she and Charles used to make, discovering inexpensive art, furniture, and conversation pieces in flea markets for furnishing their home and the restaurants. They don't do that much anymore. Even in rural Indiana, bargains have become scarce. To the Laughners, value is a cardinal virtue. Charles says he was flabbergasted on a recent visit to New York when he saw a takeout store selling an apple pie for twelve dollars. "Can you imagine such a thing?" he asks.

Charles and Pat Laughner could well afford to pay twelve dollars for a pie; what bothers them about the price is its arrogance. Of all the qualities prized in the family and the business, humility is held in highest esteem. When asked to describe their boss, Charles's employees, from vice-presidents to potato peelers, add the words "He's so humble" to whatever else they have to say. Charles is bothered by the motto that Laughner's has used in advertising: "Nothing but the Best." It makes him uncomfortable. "I think it might intimidate customers," he says. "It sounds like we are full of our-

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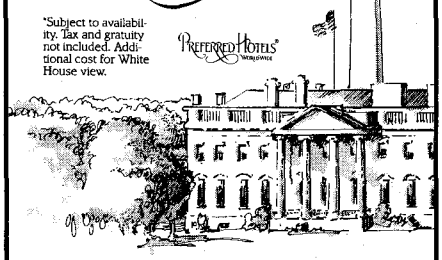

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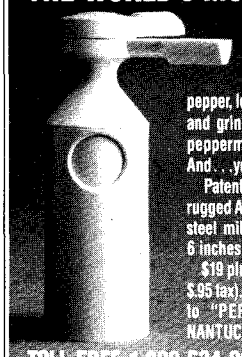

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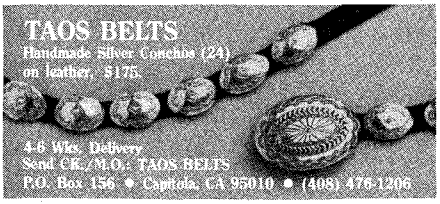

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selves. Who are we to say we are nothing but the best?"

Humility makes good business sense in Indianapolis: it is impossible to imagine an imperious ego succeeding there. "People in this city are not interested in glitter," the city's deputy mayor, John Krauss, says. "We pay for good food, value, and good service." Ten years ago, the Laughners opened a full-service restaurant called Jonathon's, which featured an all-premium-brand bar, freshly squeezed juices as mixers, and an open, obviously expensive copper-clad kitchen. Business wasn't good until the bar started offering ordinary liquor and packaged juices, and the ostentatious kitchen was blocked from view by a room divider.

Another component of the Laughner formula is industry. "No one in this family inherits anything but the name and experience," he says. "We are a family company, but my brothers and I had to buy the restaurants. We worked for them. And the next generation will have to do the same thing. Our closeness works because we are separate. You have to make your own mistakes."

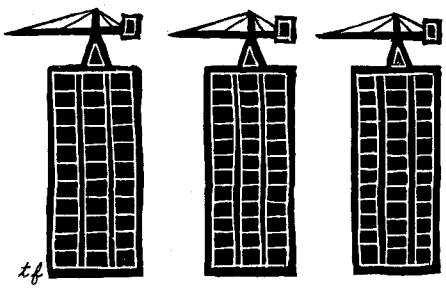
Rick Laughner, a twenty-eight-year-old nephew, who, like Charles, temporarily left the business (to manage an ice-skating rink), and who is now the senior manager of the newest cafeteria, in Castleton, says, "We are more tied together than any other family I have seen. The second generation all grew up together, and they are all best friends. They shared everything —work, vacations, and even their homes." Charles points out that there are nearly always some Laughners temporarily staying at his house; recently, it was Chip and his wife, whose own house was being built.

Nothing is given to Laughner children except the opportunity to begin at the bottom of the family business. Chad Laughner, Chip's twelve-year-old son, buses tables at Castleton. He likes the work, because it pays more than his allowance and brings him closer to his goal of buying a rifle, so he can go deer hunting with his father. Although Chad is new at the job, he has experience cooking. His specialty is hamburgers; at home, he has developed a recipe for sautéed cauliflower; and when he made butterscotch-coated pretzels in his home-economics class he calculated the per-unit cost to be ten cents.

"The first time I saw Chad, in his bow tie, busing tables, it was déjà vu," Chip says as he watches his son carrying loads of dishes across a dining room. "When I was eleven, I begged to work in the cafeterias, so I could buy a horn for my bicycle. By the time I was fifteen, I was starting to enjoy it. My parents told me to be a doctor or a lawyer. They warned me against the restaurant business—told me the hours were terrible. I know I should try to get my children to be doctors or lawyers, too, but I think they'll come into the business, just as I did. That's my job, as I see it: to have Laughner's here for the next generation."

IN Castleton, a suburb on the northeast side of Indianapolis, a mustering of life-sized aluminum storks nest on the chimney of the new Laughner's. They were installed to announce its birth, on October 26, 1987. The cafeteria that opened that day represents a dramatic reconfiguration of the Laughner formula. Messages run sideways on the bulbs of a computer-generated sign at the front of the building: "LAUGHNER'S SUPER CAFETERIA . . . FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED SINCE 1888 . . . TEMP. 78° . . . TIME 11:54 . . . OPEN LABOR DAY. . . ORDER YOUR WHOLE PIES NOW."

Nearly everything about this cafeteria seems different. The familiar Tudor look is gone, replaced by a style that Charles Laughner calls Country French–Southwestern American. Castleton is bright. Its roof is copper, and its walls are the color of adobe. Sun streams through skylights and etched-glass windows. No more heavy red Axminster carpet: the floors in the lobby and the serving room are quarry tile enhanced with pieces of glazed Mexican tile; wood-parquet paths lead to pastel carpeting that matches the mauve-buff-and-aqua dining rooms. Ceilings are high; some slope, ranch-house style, with exposed rough-hewn beams. Lighting is recessed or on tracks. There is no Old World pewter or china, no fusty portraits of beetle-browed gentry. Here are copper utensils, clay pots, cattle skulls, Indian rugs, and framed prints of fish and flora. "THIS WAY TO GOOD EATING" —the sign at the beginning of the line in every Laughner's cafeteria—is written in neon rather than carved in wood. Castleton is the paradigm for future Laughner's cafeterias, and the pattern for the remodelling of all the old ones. "We have reached the point where we were twenty-five years ago when we created a new kind of cafeteria at Southern Plaza," Charles Laughner says. "The look of 1963 is now out of date."



Instead of a single straight line, the cafeteria at Castleton has what Laughner calls a "flexible footprint," which means that food is served in a variety of places. After the preview line but before the traditional straight line, customers pass the Cookery—an open grill featuring cooked-to-order meats and fish. An exhibition bakery, lit as brightly as a stage and visible from outside the restaurant, sells whole pies, cakes, breads, and pastries. A drive-in window is available for people who don't want to get out of their cars. An inside pickup counter sells whole dinners to go. Laughner's Natural Classic Ice Cream is dished out at a fountain specializing in sodas, sundaes, and milkshakes in tall silver beakers.

Laughner's is not alone in its modernization. In the cafeterias of the South and the Southwest, similar changes are taking place. Morrison's, the biggest cafeteria chain in the country—with a hundred and sixty-three locations, including one in southern Indiana—began ten years ago to add preview lines, like Laughner's, to make the wait more tempting. It, too, has added grills to the line, where customers can watch chicken, seafood, and steak cooked to order. At the Highland Park cafeterias in Dallas, the day's menu choices are displayed on video screens.

One reason for the upgrading is competition. Cafeterias occupy a vulnerable market niche between fast-food counter service and full-service dining rooms. Low-end franchise restaurants are cheaper and speedier than cafeterias, and can be found at nearly every exit of every interstate highway. Some "tablecloth" restaurants have adopted the casual airs of New American Cui-

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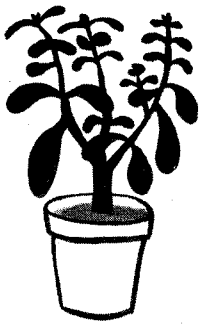
sine, and offer the informal home cooking that once lured customers into cafeterias. Between the extremes of efficiency and chic, old-fashioned steam-table food and institutional self-service can seem awfully drab. "Dining-out choices have grown enormously," Chip Laughner says. "It is no longer possible to rest on our laurels. Long John Silver's is going after the same dollars we are."

There are some seventy restaurants on the short strip of road between the Castleton cafeteria and I-465, and in the shopping center at the next exit there is a modern MCL Cafeteria—Laughner's competitor, part of a chain begun in 1950 by a Laughner relative. MCL now has twenty-seven cafeterias, in malls and shopping centers in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana. Charles Laughner says he has tried to patent as many of his innovations as possible, but food-service designs are tough to protect. MCL's billboards advertise it as "The Better Cafeteria."

One area in which MCL never emulated Laughner's was interior décor. In contrast to the English-Dutch-Colonial motif for which Laughner's has long been known, most MCLs have a simple, bright appearance. They look new; to some people—especially those whose taste has been fashioned by the minimalist décor of fast-food shops—Laughner's looks old. Castleton's décor is supposed to overcome the image of cafeterias as places frequented by old people, and an informal study of its Sunday customers indicates that the new formula is having its planned effect. A young, casually dressed couple with a baby in a rolling high chair moved through the line on a recent Sunday. "I never wanted to go to Laughner's before," the wife said. "We thought only old people ate here," the husband said. Their minds had been changed by a story in the Indianapolis *News* that praised Castleton's blackened red snapper.

Castleton's kitchen, like the kitchens of all other Laughner cafeterias, works from a menu planner written each Monday by Michael Fiddler, who is thirty-three years old and is *not* a Laughner. Fiddler started with the company as a chicken fryer fifteen years ago; now he does the buying and the menu planning for all the stores. His job is to order the groceries and then make sure they are used efficiently. Every Monday morning, all managers call in their inventories. On the basis of those figures, Fiddler determines what will be on the menu each day that week. "Between nine and ten o'clock on Monday morning, I can establish the weekly menu planner at all levels for all stores," he says. A computer-printed spread sheet for a week at Castleton lists more entrées and vegetables than the sheets for the other stores, but, like all the Laughner's menus, it is structured around a ritual that regular customers know well. Wednesday is always the day for pot roast with fresh vegetables; Thursday means chicken livers and breaded tenderloin; Swiss steak is a regular Sunday feature, with a rotating selection of gravies—vegetable, brown, or mushroom.



Fiddler is the man the food suppliers see if they want Laughner's to serve their product. Because of Castleton's expanded menu (about ten per cent new items), he has lately been inundated with things to taste. The other day, a sales representative from Portland sold him a new cheese sauce. "I was kind of amazed at that, because we switched cheese sauces just three years ago," he says. "Back then, I had become dissatisfied with the one we were using, so we got a new product, from Carnation. It was good, but we altered the recipe for our stores. When the people from Carnation came and tasted what we'd done with it, they took our version back and reformulated their product to our specifications. Now it's sold all over the country. But when the sales rep from Portland came to me with the even newer sauce I knew that it was time to change once again. Today, I've got a good lemon-pie filling in front of me." He says this with some trepidation, for he is suggesting that Laughner's tried-and-true lemon pie may be up for alteration, too.

Fiddler and Charles Laughner recently completed a two-year search for a ham they liked. "That was Mr. Laughner's idea," Fiddler says. "He said he wanted the old-type ham. I don't remember that far back, but he knew just what he wanted." Laughner was unhappy with the blubbery, processed product sold by most meat distributors, and wanted a country ham, but not a salty one. So he and Fiddler searched out ham houses throughout the lower Midwest. Dozens of hams failed their taste tests—too dry, too chewy, not porcine enough—until they came to Dewig's sugar-cured, smoked ham, in Haubstadt, Indiana. It was coral pink, faintly smoke-flavored, moist (but not too moist), tender enough to cut with firm edge-of-fork pressure, but satisfyingly resilient: almost perfect. "We asked them to ease off on the sodium and to add a bit of smoke flavor," Fiddler says. "Mr. Laughner was happy. Now they are making a ham to our specifications; we go through about a thousand pounds a week." Ham and its progeny, ham patties with sweet-and-sour sauce, are a wild-card item on all Laughner's menus, including Castleton's, once or twice a week. "That is not to say someone won't come by my office tomorrow with a ham we like better," Fiddler says. "We are always tasting."

The opening of Castleton has made Fiddler's job more interesting. In addition to managing a one-month all-store shopping list that usually includes thirty-seven thousand pounds of beef, thirty-eight thousand pounds of chicken, nine thousand pounds of pork, sixteen thousand pounds of fish, and forty thousand pounds of potatoes, he now spends much more time in the kitchen testing and tasting. He is especially excited about one new dish that was developed for Castleton but is now also available at the other cafeterias in the chain. "Rotisserie chicken," he says. "It's coming on like gangbusters." He notes that the chickens are bought locally—from a plant in Corydon, Indiana, a hundred and twenty miles south of Indianapolis, whose coops and stockrooms he inspects twice a year.

Castleton and all the other cafeterias will begin serving breakfast in the not too distant future. That presents Fiddler with a new set of decisions. "I've got an office full of pancake mixes, cold cereals, and fruit salads," he says. Laughner's has been serving breakfast successfully at the Dutch Oven for the last five years, but doing it successfully in a cafeteria is a challenge. From January to June this year, Laughner's experimented with breakfast at the Kokomo and Terre Haute locations,

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where customers were invited to read a free newspaper or watch the morning news on a television set in one of the dining rooms. The problem is how to present the food. "I've got to fill an eighty-foot line with breakfast," Fiddler said. "Believe me, that is a lot of eggs and pastries."

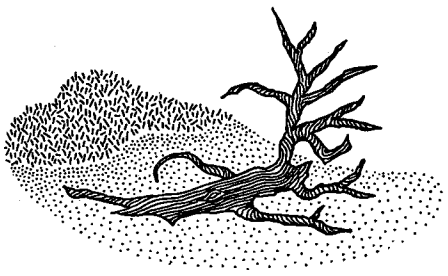
LAUGHNER's is known as a family-run restaurant; in the weeks after Castleton opened, it was overstaffed with Laughner relatives and veteran employees who came from the other stores to study and help perfect the new footprint. In the kitchen, on the serving line, and in the dining rooms one could spot dozens of people wearing tiny pins that spelled out "Laughner's," the jewel of the apostrophe signifying years of service. Twenty years is represented by a diamond, fifteen by an emerald, ten by a sapphire, five by a ruby. Wearers of pins are keepers of the cherished traditions. Charles and Chip and Richard and Rick Laughner and Richard Tierney and all the other relatives and loyal nonrelatives have been with the company for years, learning the business from the inside. At Castleton, for the first time, food-service professionals are being hired to supplement the experience of the family and the veteran employees. It is a radical change of strategy.

Nelson Kirk would never have come to work at an ordinary Laughner's. He is a modern man, twenty-six years old, who is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, in Hyde Park, New York. He suspects that he is one of the few chefs in Indianapolis who packs a knife holster. Four blades hang low on his right hip—eight-inch and ten-inch French knives, an eight-inch slicer, and a six-inch boning knife. He wears a tall white toque and, with it, a white chef's kerchief gathered into a fraternity ring he got while earning a management degree at Ball State University, in Muncie. He joined Laughner's in 1987, because the new super cafeteria offered an opportunity to experiment. "I think this unit has a lot of potential," he predicted. "We want to blend the new into the old. I myself prefer new."

Kirk was put in charge of the Castleton kitchen. He planned to offer veal Madagascar (scallops in a sauce of Pernod, cream, and shallots), shrimp with curry cream sauce (his own recipe), and grilled lamb medallions with apricot sauce (also his own recipe). Only seven months after Castleton's opening, however, Kirk left Laughner's. Not long before leaving, he said, "Sometimes I feel like an odd duck here. It is totally different from anyplace I've worked and all I learned at the Culinary Institute." He found that it was not so easy to change recipes and kitchen ways that are decades old.

The most conspicuously different foods at Castleton are displayed in its bakery. Alongside familiar fruit pies and freshly baked loaves of white bread is an array of breads, cakes, and pastries like those sold by food boutiques in expensive department stores. They are the work of José Mula, aged thirty-seven, who, like Kirk, arrived at Laughner's with an educated palate. "As far as bread goes, the place was a mess when I came in," says Mula, who started working at the Dutch Oven four years ago and is now in charge of the bakery at Castleton. Mula began his career as a baker's apprentice in Cannes when he was fourteen, and he was running a French bakery in Fort Myers, Florida, when he answered an advertisement that the Laughners placed in a trade paper.

Mula brought a Floridian touch to the bakery's takeout case: bread loaves baked in the shape of alligators. And he boasts that his "Tropézienne"—a sugar-topped creation of sweet dough layered with vanilla mousseline—is a great favorite with the staff, though it is not yet a big seller at the counter. When Castleton begins to serve breakfast, his pastries will be a featured attraction. It is in the look of the takeout case that his influence is strongest. Unlike the homey clutter of muffin tins and iron pans at the bread station in the Castleton cafeteria line, the bakery's takeout case is a display of professional razzle-dazzle: frosted cakes, fruit tarts, French pastries. Nonetheless, Mula feels that he has yet to show his best stuff. "I don't think they were really looking for a French-pastry chef when they hired me," he says. "I haven't done much of that since I got here."



Of all the professionals who have been hired, Peggy Rockwell, who joined the company as quality-control director early in 1987, seems to fit most comfortably into the world of Laughner's. "Why be a gourmet?" she asks. "That's not what they pay me for." Miss Rockwell, whose job it is to test and develop recipes and add them to the Laughner's menu, studied nutrition at Indiana University. She is a native Indianapolan, and she has worked as food-and-beverage director in hospitals, restaurants, and company dining rooms in Chicago and Hilton Head Island. "I am a cook, not a chef," she says. Her additions to the Castleton menu have included Parmesan chicken and Parmesan fish (for the Cookery) and several new kinds of whipped-cream gelatine; not long ago, she was working on a recipe for cherry-Coke gelatine.

It takes at least six months for Miss Rockwell to develop a recipe. Every detail must be right. Should carrots be sliced straight or on an angle, and exactly how thick? Does the parsley garnish go on top of the block of baked fish or on the side? How many ounces in a portion of linguine, and how much sausage is included in that portion? Once she is happy with the recipe, it goes to Gary Sharp, the director of data processing, who costs it out. If the price makes sense, Miss Rockwell takes it to one of the Laughner cafeteria kitchens, where she demonstrates to the staff how to make it. If customers buy it and like it, it goes into the weekly menu planner.

Gelatine molds are on the way out at Castleton, Miss Rockwell says. Cubes and squares will stay on the menu, but it has been determined that individual molds don't measure up. Gelatine—what is often referred to as Jell-O—is a subject to which she gives considerable attention. She explains that it is the "plain boring" cubes that sell best, not the elaborate nut-and-fruit-filled blocks. "And, despite what you would think, red Jell-O is not that big," she continues. "I have found that all colors are equally popular." She sends a busboy out to the Castleton kitchen for a sample of a new item she is particularly proud of—strawberry-cream gelatine. It is a perfectly square three-inch pad of pudding about an inch tall, of an unblemished opaque flamingo pink. It has been whipped to a vaporous tex-

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ture; if you look closely, you can see that thousands of infinitesimal air bubbles create its buoyancy. Before anyone has a chance to slide a fork into this pink chiffon, she reaches for the plate and moves the sprig of parsley from the side to the top of the square. "There!" she says. "Now it looks as it should."

SUNDAY noon at Castleton's Cookery, Gary Bales stands with a spatula and a fork behind a display case in which portions of raw fish, raw meat, and raw chicken are lined up on ice. He wears a toque and a maroon chef's jacket, and solicits orders as people pass. Many of them look surprised, even shocked, to see uncooked food in a cafeteria. Bales explains that if they order something here he will time its preparation so that it arrives at their tray piping hot when they reach the end of the line. Behind him is a grill where he has a salmon steak cooking; he sprinkles on lemon pepper and a ladleful of melted butter, then covers it with an inverted pie pan.

Many people, despite their curiosity, walk on past to the familiar displays of food that is ready to eat. "We've got to educate them that they can order what they like," Chip Laughner observes. The hesitancy about trying custom cooking may arise from unfamiliarity with some of the items. "When we tell them mahimahi is dolphin, we reassure them that it's a fish, not a mammal," Chip says. "They don't want to be eating Flipper." The Cookery menu board suggests many things never before seen in cafeterias: the blackened red snapper, tuna steak, the Parmesan chicken, and gourmet hamburgers (better beef than ordinary ones). And most items on the Cookery menu cost twice as much as familiar Laughner entrées. Swordfish is six dollars and fifty cents, and a bacon-wrapped filet mignon is seven ninety-nine. They are low prices compared with those in almost any full-service restaurant, but they can be a shock to cafeteriagoers accustomed to paying two dollars and fifteen cents for fried chicken or two sixty-nine for roast beef.

Excited though the Laughners are about Castleton's novelty, they have been careful not to break many traditions at the outset. "Evolution, not revolution," Charles says. The shaky start of Jonathon's, ten years ago, taught them that change cannot be radical, and that Indianapolans are reluctant to pay for sizzle, even if they also get steak. To demonstrate why they feel they must move gradually in reconfiguring the formula, Charles recalls the 1971 opening of Laughner's Dutch Oven—a modest café by almost any standards. In the suggestion box one day was a card on which a customer had written, "I don't want to pay for Charles Laughner's ego." The customer was used to the apparent bargain of self-service. He considered the Dutch Oven's staff of waitresses an unnecessary frill.

"That S.O.B. Laughner won't get me again," gripes a man standing in a long line the day after Castleton's grand opening. "I'm sixty-five years old, and this is slow, slow, slow. On top of that, it's the ugliest building I ever saw."

Chip Laughner overhears him and calls out the big gun—his father. "We are new," Charles tells the man. "We are trying our best." Meeting the boss makes the man less edgy. But several customers express dismay about all the commotion. Even at five customers per minute, the waiting line backs up into the parking lot. Chip hopes to raise the speed to seven customers a minute. After eating, the complainer carefully fills out one of the cards placed on every Laughner's table and drops it in the suggestion box. Will he be back? He expects so.

"We've been eating at Laughner's for ten or twelve years," says Doris Shadle, who with her husband, Herbert, comes in from Muncie—a round trip of a hundred miles—for a Laughner's meal about once a week. "We know good from bad real quick," she goes on. "We are certain type eaters. We love the same old thing. But the atmosphere here is wonderful." The Shadles were so interested in Castleton that they drove to town twice in one week. Of course, they ate the same old things—fried chicken and roast beef.

Identity is the issue at Castleton: Laughner's is trying to balance its yearning for a new one with a history nobody wants to leave behind. For many of those who have eaten at Laughner's all their lives, it is a relief when they round the corner past the neon "THIS WAY TO GOOD EATING" sign and see pans full of fried chicken. As for the new look of the dining rooms, one old man, on his way out with his wife after a Sunday dinner of ham and cherry sauce, says, "It's a

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Earlier this year, Japan Air Lines invited you to enter a haiku contest. The response was pure poetry: Over 40,000 of you sent in entries. Now, our panel of judges has chosen a winner, Bernard Lionel Einbond of New York City and Crestwood, New York. Mr. Einbond's winning haiku runs:

frog pond....
a leaf falls in
without a sound

Japan Air Lines would like to thank all the poets who submitted entries and congratulate Mr. Einbond and the 200 other entrants awarded Honorable Mention.

HONORABLE MENTION

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Patricia Donegan, IL
Arizona Zipper, ME
Doug Pletcher, IL
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Larry Gates, MS
Ruth M. Yarrow, NY
Gene Williamson, NJ
MaryLu Suri, NY
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George Mokray, MA
LeRoy Gorman, ONT
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Carmine Sarracino, PA
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J. C. Greene, NY
Robert F. Mainone, MI
Randy Johnson, WA
Ruby Spriggs, ONT
Richard Tice, UT
Ross Kremer, NJ
Justine Matthies, WA
Denise Coney, ONT
Dee Evetts, BC
Wharton Hood, ONT

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Ruth Holter, CA
Diane Hofland, OR
Brent Partridge, CA
R. Nikolas Macioci, OH
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Laughner's, all right." He puffs out his chest and adds, "You know how I know? Because the place is filled with Laughners."

—Jane and Michael Stern

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DEPARTMENT OF AMPLIFICATION

Vineyard Haven
July 20, 1988

The Editors, *The New Yorker*
Dear Sirs:

In my recent essay on James Agee, which appeared under the heading A Critic at Large in the July 18th issue, I did not give sufficient credit to some of the writings that had been helpful, beyond my own recollections, in the preparation of the article—works that recount various incidents from Agee's life. With your permission, I would like to acknowledge several of those writings more particularly. They are Agee's own "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men," published by Houghton Mifflin in 1941; "Letters of James Agee to Father Flye," published by George Braziller in 1962; "Agee on Film, Volume II: Five Film Scripts," published by McDowell, Obolensky in 1960; Robert Fitzgerald's "A Memoir," included as the preface to "The Collected Short Prose of James Agee," which was edited by Fitzgerald and published by Houghton Mifflin in 1968; Genevieve Moreau's "The Restless Journey of James Agee," published by Morrow in 1976; "Agee: His Life Remembered," edited by Ross Spears and Jude Cassidy, which was published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston in 1985; "Death of a Poet," by Dwight Macdonald, which appeared in *The New Yorker*, November 16, 1957; "Greatness with One Fault in It," by Lionel Trilling, which appeared in *The Kenyon Review*, Winter, 1942; and, especially, Laurence Bergreen's "James Agee: A Life," the most comprehensive and thoroughly researched biography of Agee to appear in print so far, which was published by Dutton in 1984 and, in paperback, by Penguin in 1985. I very much regret any discourtesy on my part, or any distress caused to Mr. Bergreen or others by these omissions.

Sincerely,
John Hersey

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THE THEATRE

Much Aplomb

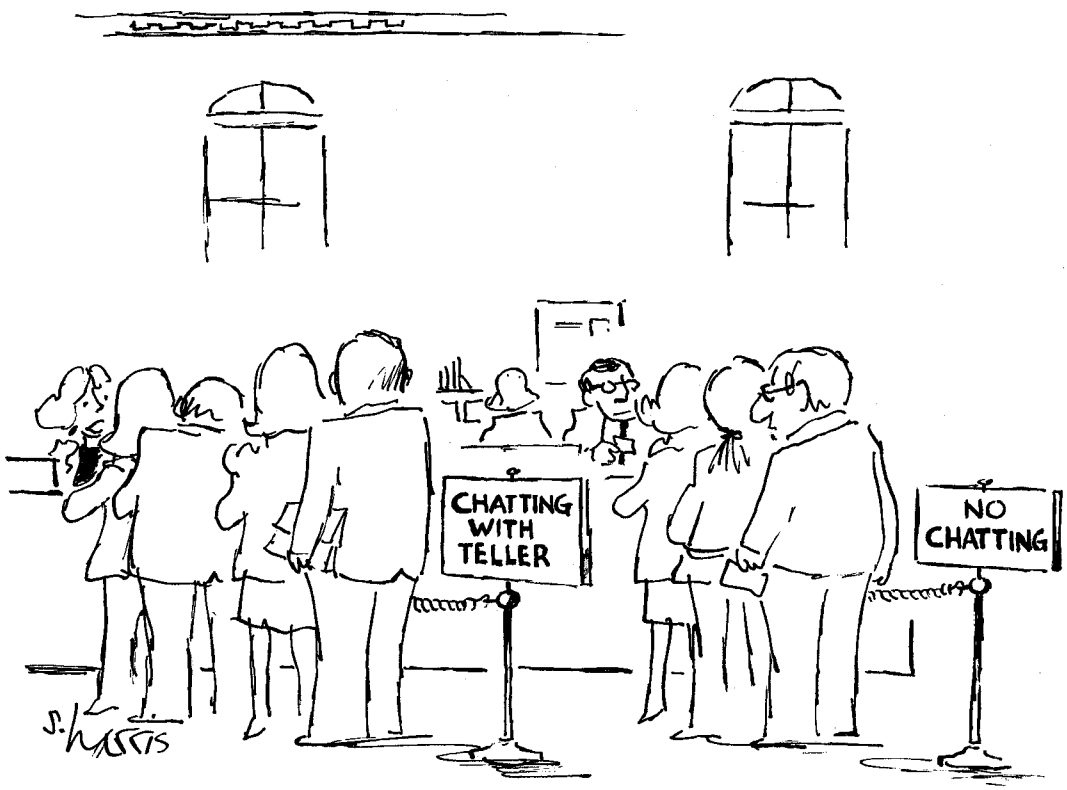
ONE of the best things about the Central Park production of "Much Ado About Nothing," starring Blythe Danner and Kevin Kline as Beatrice and Benedick, is the way the perennially warring lovers behave when they finally make friends. She runs to him and he spins her around—an echo of television soap-commercial romance—but at the point where two normal people (or television lovers) would look at each other and kiss these two just look at each other.

The scene in which Beatrice and Benedick come to terms after Hero and Claudio's abortive wedding is potentially one of the most romantic encounters in English letters. Beatrice's cousin has just been publicly humiliated by Benedick's best friend. The romance—gentlemen, take note—lies chiefly in the aplomb with which Benedick handles the delicate situation. All the same, it's important that the two refrain from kissing until the very end of the play. Beatrice is one of those comic heroines who risk dying alone because of character more than because of situation, and we have to feel her danger.

This production, which runs through July 31st at the Delacorte Theatre and may move to Broadway, was directed by Gerald Freedman. Mr. Freedman is the artistic director of the Great Lakes Theatre Festival, which produced last season's disappointing revival of George Abbott and Philip Dunning's "Broadway." His "Much Ado," every bit as lively and entertaining as "Broadway" was sluggish, is an almost non-stop delight. The style of the production is Italian mixed with elements of Regency England: John Ezell has designed a system of Mediterranean roads and façades, but the terra-cotta house-fronts are draped in wisteria, the windows are leaded, and Theoni Aldredge's costumes are reminiscent of Jane Austen. At the beginnings of scenes, young men come out and transport us to another part of Messina by shifting a turntable structure a few degrees one way or the other. At dusk, lights glow in windows and the men sit chatting on walls.

New York has had no shortage of good revivals of "Much Ado" in recent years: in 1984, the Royal Shakespeare Company brought over Terry Hands' production (with Derek Jacobi and Sinead Cusack); last year, Gerald Gutierrez directed the Acting Company in a version set in Cuba in the nineteen-thirties; and A. J. Antoon's 1972 production is still within memory. If Mr. Freedman's production rivals those, it is partly because he is so fortunate in his leading players. Miss Danner and Mr. Kline play the lovers with a vivid Ealing-comedy sweetness that is utterly endearing. Their relationship stresses the buffoonery of romance over the romance of buffoonery. Initially, the miking of Miss Danner's husky voice is a problem—during the first third of the play, I kept wishing she would clear her throat—and her early sparring with Benedick lacks mirth and sexiness. But, then, she has opted for the disappointed-in-love interpretation: more than the "merry" side of Beatrice, which the Prince, Don Pedro, finds so endearing, Miss Danner emphasizes the hard edge of bitterness in a woman with no resources other than her sharp tongue. That she manages to make Beatrice winsome in her hapless inability to speak love—or even speak low—is extraordinary. Mr. Kline's performance, meanwhile, is about the stupidity that lies at the root of vanity. His Benedick is the *miles gloriosus* of Roman comedy, all slow thought and attitudinizing, but love brings insight and a stiff-backed dignity that is pure Alec Guinness.

I never saw Kline in his broadly comic stage roles, in "The Pirates of Penzance" and "On the Twentieth Century." But what has marred his past performances in Shakespeare—as Hamlet, as Henry V, as Richard III—was an unwillingness to relinquish his matinée-idol image and play a character less attractive than he is. In "Much Ado" Kline has the grace to make himself ridiculous. He also resists the temptation to play to the audience—one of the hardest things for a Central Park actor to avoid. Whatever Kline is doing at a given moment—struggling manfully with a door to obtain passage offstage, or falling backward through a ground-floor win-



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dow, trying to learn humility by doing silly things with his hands, or taking four distinct stages of silent thought to arrive at the notion that Beatrice's love must be requited—you have the feeling he'd be doing it in exactly the same way however we responded. From his recent experience in an Ealing-inspired movie ("A Fish Called Wanda"), Kline seems to have learned something about understatement and about the appeal of the actor willing to disfigure himself for the audience's amusement. With two such strong performances in the roles of Beatrice and Benedick, a strong Don Pedro is needed to make the gulling of the lovers believable. This Mr. Freedman has in Brian Murray, whom New Yorkers may remember for his performance as the long-suffering director in Michael Frayn's "Noises Off." Mr. Murray uses his flexible, foghorn voice to make Don Pedro appear to be the only sane man in a village of fools. He's wise, kind, playful, and irresistibly sarcastic, seeming at times like a perfect match for Beatrice. You really feel for him when she turns down his proposal of marriage.

Playing Don Pedro in this way is fun but by no means necessary. The Shakespearean manipulator is always a morally ambiguous figure, one who makes the world a little more dangerous by tampering with other people's free will. In "Much Ado," Don Pedro's well-meant machinations are balanced by the evil machinations of his bastard brother, Don John; the same forces—lies and hearsay—are at work in both plot and subplot. In a well-rounded production, the "nothing" about which so much fuss is being made should refer, by turns, to romance itself and to the substanceless rumors and accusations flying about the stage. This production soft-pedals all the play's sinister undertones, turning Don John into a figure of high burlesque, missing the central fact of Claudio's character—this young man is absurdly ready to believe himself betrayed—and reducing Hero's deeply mourning uncle, Antonio (George Hall), to a stock comic cipher. Here, only a passing nod is given to the violent world outside Messina—a disused cannon. Still, that's all right for a midsummer, alfresco production.

Not everything is quite so all right. In the first scene, a tuba oompahs distractingly offstage, and a single, unfunny piece of business, repeated endlessly, obscures the comic point of the Dogberry scenes. Tina Paul's choreography leaves something to be desired, and some of John Morris's music—particularly his setting for "Sigh No More"—seems rather Appalachian. (Given the production's aesthetic, Thomas Moore's "Irish Melodies" would have been more apt.) But these are minor points.

The staging is lively, the acting top-notch and notable for its uniformity. It's rare for everyone in a Central Park production to be performing in the same key. The only exception here is Jerry Stiller, who, misused as Dogberry, sounds continually as though he were quoting from a book of Yiddish proverbs. As the villainous Don John, David Pierce is transcendently funny as he throws fainting fits at the thought of other people's happiness—here's another actor who resists the temptation to ham—and he's well partnered by Dylan Baker's smiling Borachio. Don Reilly makes an impressive Claudio—particularly in the wedding scene, where he gets at the savagery in Claudio's extreme moral righteousness. Phoebe Cates is inconsistent in the role of Hero. She doesn't seem at all natural until the duping-of-Beatrice scene (where Hero has a chance to speak *un*naturally), but she comes into her own in the wedding scene, managing, without whining or affectation, to make us believe in the concept of virginity as an abstract principle—which is all you can really ask of an actress playing Hero today. Even the lesser roles are well handled: as the shallow serving girl Margaret, Leslie Geraci is suitably vulgar, and Dan Butler does well by Borachio's sidekick, Conrade. Only Mr. Stiller seems out of place. If the production does move to Broadway, Mr. Freedman might think about letting him off the hook: he looks so unhappy. —MIMI KRAMER

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ANTICLIMAX DEPARTMENT

[*From the Library Journal*]

Weingand and Wood may be likened to Ronald Amundsen and Robert F. Scott. While Amundsen and Scott raced to see who would be the first to reach the South Pole, Weingand and Wood race to be the first to merge the powerful management tools of strategic planning and marketing for libraries.

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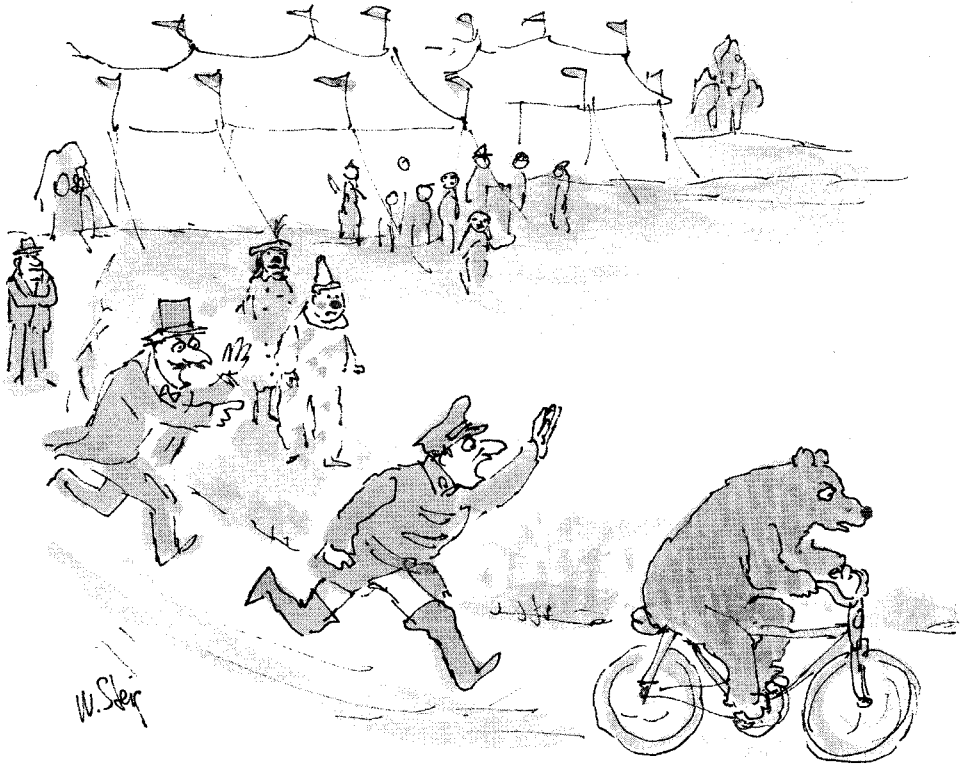
MUSICAL EVENTS

Carnegie Joys and Cares

CARNEGIE HALL's 1987-88 season was rich. Most weeks, I found myself there two or three times, drawn by the programs, by the performers, or by both. There was much to be grateful for, much to enjoy. And yet at almost every visit enjoyment was clouded to some extent by regret that in the 1986 restoration and partial rebuilding of the hall its once-reliable acoustics were altered for the worse. The people who run the hall do not agree that things are worse. They profess themselves content with the hall as it is now, and have announced that no changes are in prospect for 1988-89. Are there many listeners who agree with them, who do not prefer the sound of Carnegie Hall as it was?

I say "listeners." From performers we have been getting varied opinions. My impression is that many orchestral players are unhappy about, even dismayed by, what has happened, while solo artists are less affected. Alfred Brendel, whose four Schubert piano recitals were one of the chief attractions of the season, told me that from his point of view—from his on-stage seat—the new hall seemed preferable to the old; he could hear more clearly exactly what he was doing. I wish he could have heard himself from my usual seat (which is toward the back, on the left aisle), where rapid passages blur, where a strange "ghost echo" runs repeated notes together, where tones resist any precise focus on their point of origin and seem to be emanating from heaven knows where. Mr. Brendel's piano was set back from the edge of the platform. Maurizio Pollini's piano, at the second of three Beethoven recitals he played in Carnegie this season, was brought forward right to the edge of the platform, and this placement heightened all the acoustical deficiencies. His programs were devoted to middle-period sonatas: at the first of them he played the "Funeral March," the "Pastoral," Opus 27, No. 1, and the "Moonlight" (the *Times* review was headed "POLLINI UNEARTHS LITTLE-KNOWN BEETHOVEN"), and at the second the three Opus 31 sonatas and the "Waldstein." The third and sixth notes of Opus 31, No. 3, were swallowed up by the second and fourth notes. At Mr. Pollini's breakneck speeds, runs and rapid figures became smudges. Two moments of pleasure in Opus 31, No. 3—witty "signing off" of the scherzo, and grace in the coda of the minuet—were not enough to lighten an evening of frustration. I turned in my tickets for Mr. Pollini's next recital. But Mr. Brendel's recitals held me through his series. They were devoted to late Schubert: the last eight sonatas, the "Wanderer," the Moments Musicaux, the two sets of Impromptus, and the Three Pieces, D. 946. The last three sonatas—an A-B(flat)-C of Schubert's piano writing almost as Beethoven's Opp. 130-132 are the A-B(flat)-C(sharp) of string-quartet writing—formed the final program. Mr. Brendel spent the season exploring late Schubert: he had played the cycle, or parts of it, in twenty-six European cities before bringing it to New York and Los Angeles and, in part, to six other American cities.

Emphasizing the darkness, the strangeness, the strength of Schubert's late piano music, and intent on underlining its structural inventiveness, Mr. Brendel scanted its brightness of melodic flow, attractiveness of sound, and sheer charm. Such qualities used to be manifest in the Schubert performances of Edwin Fischer, Walter Gieseking, Wilhelm Kempff. Maybe we responded so readily to the charm that we overlooked the composer's other virtues; Artur Schnabel and Clifford Curzon could remind us of those without sacrificing charm of sound and of manner. Mr. Brendel enforced sterner reminders. Some things were quite brutal—the start of the D-major Sonata, for example. The long A-major finale had no lilt or flow; its textures were thick and unclear. Other things were beautiful: a poetic, thoughtful account of the Moments Musicaux; captivating, long-span phrasing of the scherzo in the B-flat Sonata, allegro vivace con delicatezza. The sound was seldom a pleasure in itself: a thin, glassy high treble; the solid Steinway bass in music that Schubert wrote for a different sort of piano; much detail in the "Wanderer" swallowed by the acoustics. There was high rhetoric in the presentation of the last three sonatas. Mr. Brendel is often called an "analytical" interpreter. Tovey, in the preface of his "Companion to Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas," writes, "If genuinely analytical performance can



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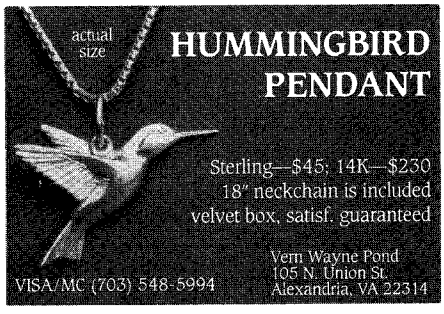
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have a fault, that fault can only be a tendency to present the music with too little care for euphony." Mr. Brendel often seems to be making points. But they are good points, exciting points, which compel attention. He is a passionate interpreter.

Annie Fischer played the B-flat Sonata at her Carnegie Hall recital—centerpiece of a program that began with Beethoven's Opus 10, No. 3, and ended with Brahms' F-minor Sonata. This was playing of supreme naturalness and grandeur—unaffected, honest, and stirring. New Grove talks rightly of the "enrapt beauty and power which she brings to late Schubert, particularly the B-flat Sonata." The Brahms was not note-perfect. Few performances are, and they generally prove to be dull. In this work (Edward Sackville-West called it a "youthful, fiery, but unduly romantic sonata"), rapture matters more than carefulness; there were also splashes of inaccuracy in Edwin Fischer's late, ardent performances of it. In all that Miss Fischer does, strength, rapture, urgency, and beauty conspire.

Steinway & Sons unveiled its five-hundred-thousandth piano at the close of a Carnegie recital in which twenty-four pianists had taken part. They were Peter Orth, Joseph Kalichstein, Robert Taub, David Dubal, José Feghali, Leon Bates, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Jerome Rose, Hai-Kyung Suh, Navah Perlman, Christopher O'Riley, Grant Johannesen, Alexander Toradze, Ruth Laredo, Barbara Nissman, Stephen Hough, Alec Chien, Ilana Vered, Cipa and Misha Dichter, Lazar Berman, Alexis Weissenberg, Edmund Battersby, and Shura Cherkassky. The finale was "Carnaval," played from alternate pianos by a relay team. There was a striking demonstration of how different the same instrument can sound under different fingers and feet. Among the more moving performances were Mr. Toradze's of a Scarlatti sonata (the performance dedicated to the memory of Youri Egorov), Miss Laredo's of a Rachmaninoff prelude, and Mr. Hough's of a Paderewski nocturne. The star of the evening was Mr. Cherkassky, in Josef Hofmann's "Kaleidoscope" and the "Chopin" and "Davidsbündler March" movements of "Carnaval." His verve, individuality, and bravura delight in the sounds a piano can make are irresistible.

The new instrument, designed by Wendell Castle, is a chunky, angular, colorful, rather odd-looking piece of furniture. It is (in the words of the Steinway fact sheet) "made out of rare East Indian ebony and Dyed Swiss Pear, and trimmed in bubinga wood with bits of brass and Gaboon ebony." The signature of "every living Steinway artist" has been engraved on it—more than nine hundred signatures, in slanting bands. The piano was inaugurated by the nine-year-old Albert Kim, who played Carlos Surinach's "Flamenco Kingdom" and Debussy's "Petit Nègre." Was he daunted or inspired to see emblazoned on the left arm of the keyboard the names Rudolf Serkin, Daniel Barenboim, Elton John, Grant Johannesen, and Noël Lee; and on the right Vladimir Horowitz, Maurizio Pollini, Van Cliburn, and Martha Argerich?

THE Philadelphia Orchestra, once renowned for its tonal beauty, has been a victim of Carnegie Hall's new acoustics. It played there in April, under Wolfgang Sawallisch. The program began with Dvořák's Scherzo Capriccioso and ended with the "New World" Symphony. In both pieces, the brasses and the percussion sounded rackety. (The brasses did not blast or bray, like the Philharmonic's; they were simply too loud.) Between the Dvořák works Peter Serkin was the soloist in Mozart's K. 451 and Stravinsky's "Movements." My seat for Philadelphia concerts is front right, under the cellos. There, in the Mozart, the piano sounded clanky and dull. I shifted to the back for "Movements," where the piano sounded better. But the orchestral tone in the "New World" was shallow. The symphony should take on a special glow in the hall of its first performance. It didn't. Mr. Sawallisch, it is true, is an interpreter esteemed more for energetic efficiency than for warmth of heart. And it may be that Riccardo Muti, the Philadelphia's music director, is urging the orchestra toward a harder, more "modern" kind of sound than Eugene Ormandy gloried in. Whatever the reason, New York has lost the evenings of sonic sumptuousness that Philadelphia visits used regularly to provide. At an earlier concert, conducted by Erich Leinsdorf, the strings sounded positively unpleasant. The program included Poulenc's Organ

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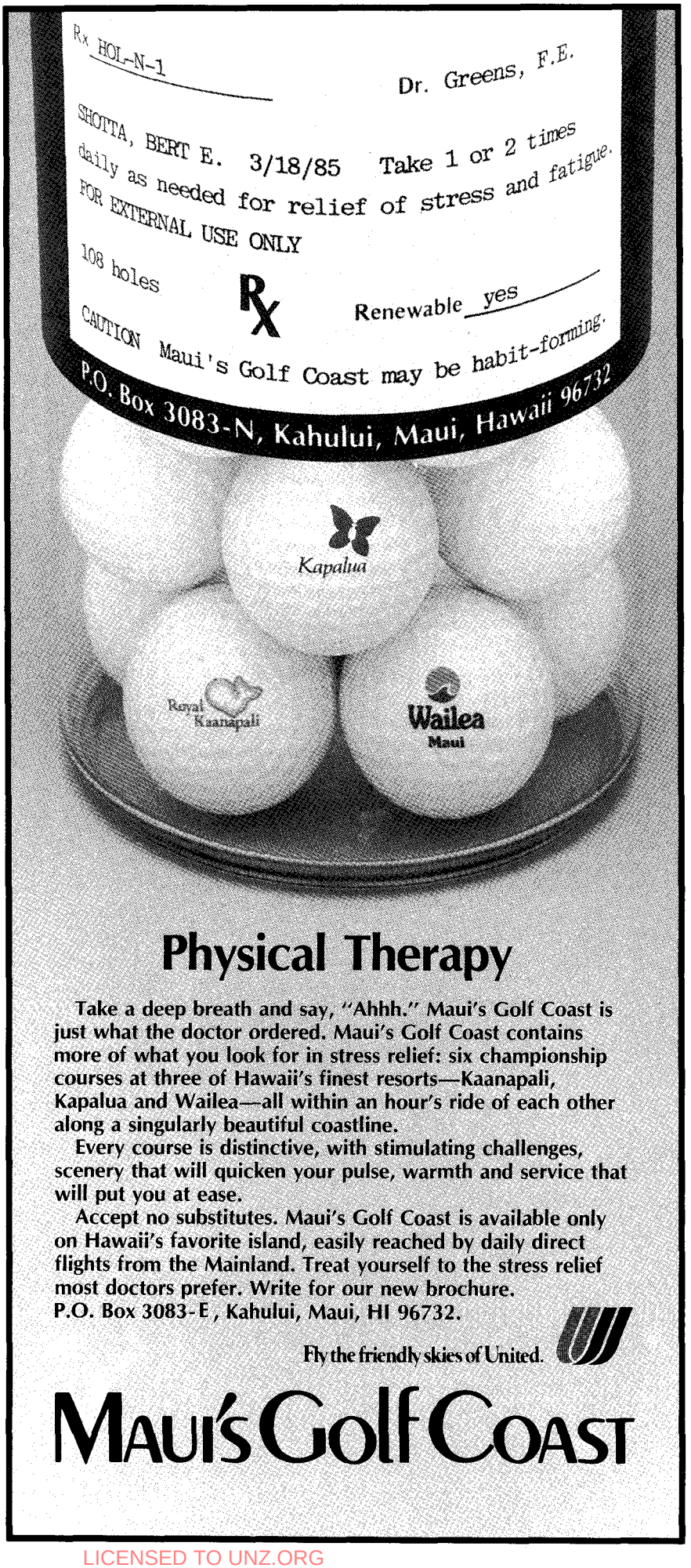
Concerto (odd choice for a hall that has no organ, only an electronic substitute) and, conducted by its composer, Leon Kirchner's Second Piano Concerto, with Marc-André Hamelin the persuasive soloist.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Hartmut Höll—an eloquent and sensitive pianist—gave three Carnegie Hall recitals, devoted in turn to Schumann, Mahler, and Wolf. I was sad to hear the singer in that large and now acoustically depleted auditorium rather than in, say, Town Hall, where details tell more keenly. But I was glad to hear him. Some fading of purely vocal means has been compensated for by ever more vivid and delicate artistry. Sometimes, to be sure, it was mime enactment: cocking an ear at the piano introduction, tiptoeing toward it, listening intently, then breaking into complementary song. More profoundly, it involved attention to what the words and the music say—bringing songs to life with the subtlest command of tones, timing, and weight. Yet the song recital I enjoyed most this season was given in Town Hall, by Elisabeth Schumann and Bruno Walter. Their program was Goethe settings by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Wolf, and Richard Strauss. The recital took place in 1950; it has reappeared on a Voce record.

Carnegie Hall is surely not beyond repair, not spoiled forever by the restoration. Experiments must be made with screens, reflectors, hangings until once again its sound is warm, consistent, and satisfactory. The alternative is dull acceptance that New York is a large city without a fine large-orchestra hall. At the moment, Avery Fisher Hall, with all its faults, is being found acoustically preferable. But that gilded barn does nothing to raise the spirits; it is a space in which orchestras can sound loud but seldom sound beautiful. Carnegie Hall, on the other hand, has architecture that prompts enjoyment, and in the restoration those architectural merits were enhanced—at terrible sonic cost. People forget quickly. It will be sad if they forget what a good hall for musical performance Carnegie once was, and unprotestingly acquiesce in its impoverishment.

—Andrew Porter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REFLECTIONS

THE QUESTION NOT ASKED

THE extraordinary political and moral adventure that began with Lenin's passage in a sealed train across the battle frontiers of the Great War, to arrive, in drama, at the Finland Station in revolutionary Petrograd, nears its end. The Bolsheviks overturned a weakened provisional government and seized control not only of Russia but of Western political imagination. Today it is Mikhail Gorbachev's effort to reconcile Lenin's legacy with its disastrous outcome in the contemporary Soviet Union that holds the world's attention.

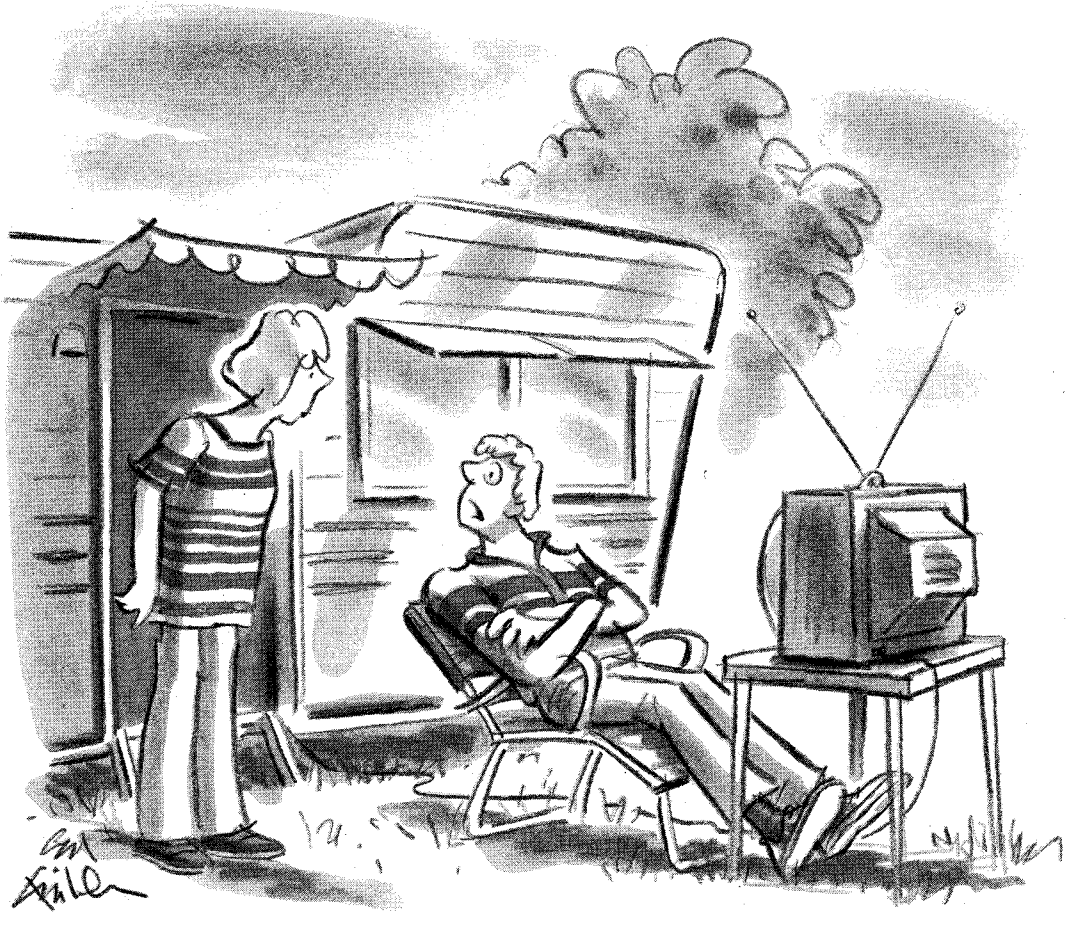
The revolutionary regime defied dynastic and republican Europe. It refused to go on with the First World War, and tried to refuse to make peace —contemptuously rejecting Germany's demands at Brest Litovsk, and expecting the German workers to overturn their government. It was surprised, and fearful, when they did not do so. "We shall perish," Lenin wrote, "if we are unable to hold out until we meet with the mighty support of other countries." No support came. Instead, there was a renewed attack and an ultimatum, from Germany, and, subsequently, Allied intervention and civil war.

The Revolution nonetheless survived, radiating abroad an idea of redemptive change. Soviet society itself changed only painfully, and by the time of the agricultural collectivization at the end of the nineteen-twenties, followed by famine, it had changed for the worse. The revolutionaries and their admirers lived for the future; the present was scarcely worth attention—it was discarded.

The challenge that the Bolsheviks offered to the West during the nineteen-twenties and the Great Depression of the thirties, and the Revolution's spread to China, seemed not just political phenomena but a mutation of society. This was felt by the Bolsheviks' enemies as strongly as by the converts. The young revolutionaries in Asia and the West—people who committed themselves to the Comintern, underground work, agitprop, spying, political penetration—did so with exemplary selflessness. That quality was at the source of their extraordinary influence on their times and the tenacity of its grip on the modern political imagination. Whittaker Chambers wrote that even as he broke with Communism, "The world I was leaving looked like the world of life and of the future. The world I was returning to seemed, by contrast, a graveyard." It is inconceivable that such a thing could be said today.

THE explicit purpose of the special Soviet Communist Party Conference held in Moscow at the end of June and the beginning of July was reform—radical reform of the structures of the Leninist state and of the Soviet economy. The implicit message of the conference was that the whole enterprise has been, in a way impossible for the Soviets yet to articulate, a terrible mistake which brought them to an impasse. They have to find some way to make up for the appalling waste inflicted by Russians upon Russians and upon others, during the last seventy years, and find new political and economic terms to go on.

Gorbachev presents himself as a reformer, but he has begun something that calls into question the Soviet system itself. The true problem before him is not "reform" of the system and of the economy. He must discover a new basis of legitimacy for Soviet society and for its government. A Soviet official said recently in Paris that the significance of *glasnost* is that it is a search by the Soviet élite and the Soviet people "to recover the moral foundations" of their society. He argued that it



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was in a return to sources, in Leninism, that they would find what they sought. They are in fact likely to find that Leninism is incapable of providing that renewed moral foundation. Leninism is at the source of what went wrong. Leninism has undeniably possessed a moral force, capable of evoking passionate and selfless response from millions of people throughout the world. But Leninism also insists on the leading role of the Communist Party, and this has proved, in practice, to result in unaccountable and despotic government by a self-nominating and self-perpetuating oligarchy that has not even success to justify it.

Gorbachev envisages a "socialist state of law" in which the government will govern and the Party will become what it was originally meant to be—"the vanguard" of Soviet society. He wants a new parliamentary body, elected, with multiple candidacies, from unions and other functional groups, and also from geographical and ethnic constituencies—a body that would become a second center of power, apart from the Party. This Congress of People's Deputies would elect from its members a small, bicameral Supreme Soviet, or supreme legislative body, which would remain in session throughout the year and decide "all legislative, administrative, and monitoring questions," as Gorbachev put it in his opening address to the special Party Conference. This Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev said, should have a President—no doubt Mr. Gorbachev himself.

Gorbachev described what he wants as reform, but it is reform that strengthens his own position. If his Party office, in which he remains vulnerable, can be combined with a state position legitimatized by the nationally elected Congress of People's Deputies, he would seem politically unassailable. This, however, is not democracy. Gorbachev wants a one-party state in which public opinion finds genuine expression within that one party and in which the party's leaders and members conduct themselves as a responsible and principled élite. He demands "an atmosphere of fidelity to principle, openness, discussion, criticism and self-criticism, unconditional personal responsibility, and efficiency." He also wants candidates for Party membership assessed for their commitment to his own view of reform. He wants a government exercising autonomous authority, obeying its own laws, doing justice within the terms of its own constitution. He believes in "democratic centralism," which means disciplined obedience to what the government or the Party has decided. He wants respect for diversity of opinion and respect for religious belief—the latter a significant step, because it concedes a place in Soviet society to a rival claimant to the moral leadership of society, promoter of a rival conception of the meaning of human existence. Gorbachev calls for these things in the year of the millennium of Christianity in Russia and at a time when the Orthodox Church is experiencing what a French scholar calls "a formidable [intellectual] ferment" and renewal, in which the principal theme is the "unyielding person" ("*la personne irréductible*"). He wants free debate and has sponsored the legal rehabilitation of the great Communist Party dissidents who were condemned in the state trials of the nineteen-thirties—Bukharin, Zinovyev, and Kamenev. They are now acknowledged to have been "innocent before the law, the state, and the people." Trotsky, who was banished from the country, will no doubt also be restored to Communism's history.

Gorbachev claims that the Soviet Union will no longer interfere in the internal affairs of the Eastern European countries. He told a gathering of Polish intellectuals on July 14th that relations between the Soviet Union and "neighboring Socialist states" must rest "on self-determination and mutual trust," and that this has not been the case in the past. He says that the Soviet Union had come to the edge of "an abyss" when he arrived in office. In 1986, to a gathering of editors and writers in Moscow, he said of the necessary changes, "If not we, who? If not now, when?"

THOSE are fundamental questions, but they are political questions, even questions of historical accountability. The question not asked, which *has* to be asked, is: What will become of the Soviet Union and the Soviet system if it abandons its intellectual and moral foundations as untrue? The forces set to work by Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union, and in Eastern Europe as well, are revolutionary forces, and they now possess a momentum that is independent of

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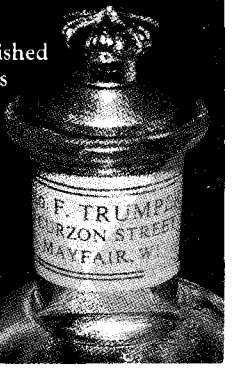

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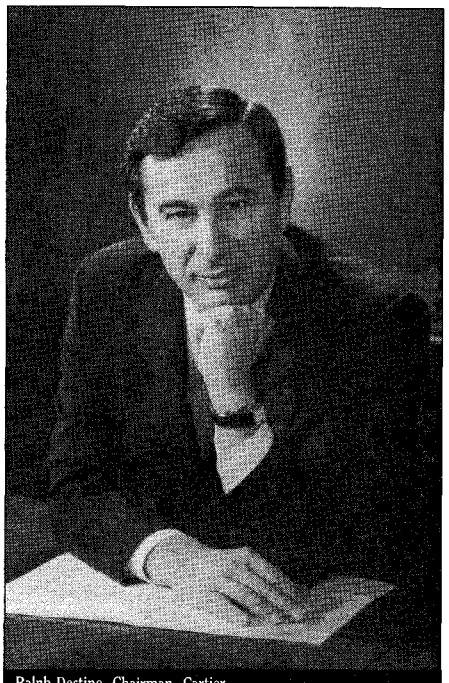

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Gorbachev's own fate. He may prove to be the Kerensky of this revolution.

It is a revolution of a rare kind: one launched from above, by the leader of the government, in response to the alienation of the most dynamic elements inside his society—its creative minority. Most members of that minority are inside the structure of state privilege, and not outside, as in other revolutions. This is a revolution disguised as radical reform that is meant to save the system. That it cannot remain mere reform, however, follows from the fact that the intellectual foundation of the system is contradicted and jeopardized by the nature of the reforms that are required. Gorbachev refers to Lenin to justify his program, yet the program undoes Leninism.

Marxism rests upon a belief in the possibility of unitary, "scientific" organization of a society and an economy. It is one of several early- and mid-nineteenth-century general theories of society and history, written with the confidence in scientific social analysis which was produced by the Enlightenment, within the particular context of the early industrial revolution. It was the product of a time and a place—Western Europe, when the old monarchical and agricultural order was disintegrating and was being replaced by industry, industrial towns, the proletarianization of labor, and the beginnings of mass political organization and participation. This was a period of displaced hierarchies, with aristocracies and the traditional "estates" of society giving way to money power and the forces of social mobility, meritocracy, and plutocracy. It was a time of great advances in the scientific investigation of the physical universe, which inspired confidence that human society was equally susceptible to scientific analysis and, eventually, manipulation to produce a better human order.

Between the eighteen-forties and the eighteen-seventies, when Marx wrote his principal works, it was possible to believe in the existence of a unitary, deterministic principle of society, and to believe in the possibility, once that principle was discovered, of a perfected classless, egalitarian social order in which man's ancient struggles over property—and over nation and religion, "bourgeois" and reactionary institutions—could be ended, and a new order of general happiness would be installed by "history" itself. The power of Leninism as a political movement derived from its implementation of the explicit messianism and utopianism of Marxist thought.

TODAY, virtually all that has to be recognized as naïve and untrue. That recognition is at the source of what has been happening in the Soviet Union since Gorbachev came to power and began to encourage expression of the long-suppressed forces of realism and renewal in Soviet society. Marxism provided powerful insights into the role of money and labor in society. It changed the way we look at the world. It remains a powerful analytical instrument. But its premises are untrue. Soviet society is organized on the basis of a Victorian interpretation of society and history, interesting and historically important, but false—all but useless as a guide to policy today, and wholly inadequate as a description of the world that actually exists. Dictatorial socialism has led the Soviet bloc into what a Hungarian sociologist, Mihaly Bihari, recently described as a "historical cul-de-sac."

The intellectual difficulties in reconciling Marxist principles with even the pragmatic and market-oriented economic adjustments that Gorbachev envisages are very great. Marx's most celebrated contribution to economic thought was the theory of "surplus value," which is created in the productive process by the discrepancy between the value invested in a product by the workman's labor and the value returned to him in wages, the difference being appropriated by the entrepreneur as profit or interest. The Soviet system claims to have abolished this as an illegitimate extortion of the reward properly due the worker. Marxism argues that, in principle, the value of a product does not lie in what it brings on the market but (as Eduard Bernstein interprets Marx) "consists in the labor expended on it, and is measured according to the time occupied by the labor employed on its production." But even in the Soviet Union this is now an irrelevant point, since the cost of labor is arbitrarily assigned, out of social and political considerations, and is actually unknown. One of the chief problems of economic management in the Soviet Union is that no one now really knows the cost of anything.

Gorbachev proposes that responsi-

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bility be delegated, and that norms of cost-effectiveness and plant and industry profitability be imposed, but within limits defined by a central authority. The Soviet Union's commitment to "scientific socialism" inveterately implies ultimate direction from the center: "scientific" national planning. Ideas of market forces, of profit as the criterion of efficiency, and of competing economic interests (or classes?)—expressions of bourgeois economic thought, and products of bourgeois conditions and practice—can be accepted in the Soviet Union only within a framework of socialist assumptions that contradict them. Gorbachev himself has somewhat obscurely described the purpose of his economic reform—in his speech last autumn commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution—as "to assure, during the next two or three years, a transition from an overly centralized command system of management to a democratic system based mainly on economic methods and on optimal combinations of centralism and self-management." He went on, "This presupposes a sharp expansion of the autonomy of enterprises and associations, their transition to the principle of profitability and self-financing, and the investment of work collectives with all the powers necessary for this."

The identification of the solution as "optimal combinations of centralism and self-management" is a purely verbal resolution of an urgent practical problem for the Soviet leaders, who are heritors of Marx and Engels' injunction that the proletariat, having become the ruling class, must "centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State" in order to bring about the final defeat of the bourgeoisie and the consequent elimination of all class divisions. Gorbachev is determined to renew his system but is constrained to do so in terms of a doctrine that, although it purports to be the most advanced and scientific description of reality that exists, actually does not account for how the modern industrial economy and industrial society work. It is a doctrine that has amply demonstrated its total inadequacy as the organizing principle of the Soviet and Soviet-bloc economies. Every serious person engaged in the direction of the Soviet economy grasps this.

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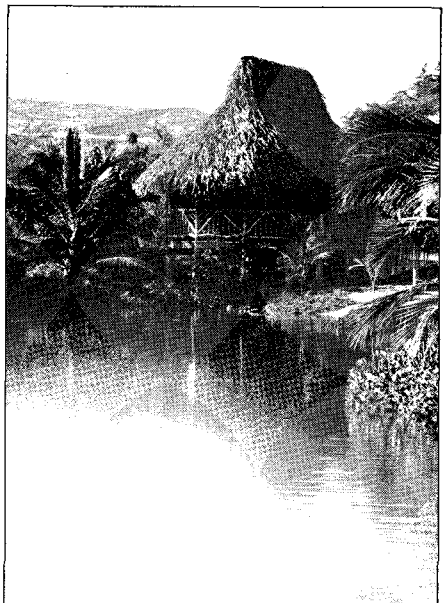

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Party's rule—and Gorbachev's own position. It is fundamental to the existence of the Soviet state and to the leading place of the Communist Party in Soviet society. Generations of the Soviet élite have committed themselves to Marxism-Leninism as the truth. Millions have died because of it.

IT is not that the Cold War is over. Marxism-Leninism is over. It is no longer of serious interest; it is a formula of words—for the moment, a formula necessary to Gorbachev and to the Soviet leadership, but without inherent interest. Whatever happens now in the Soviet Union's competition with the Western powers, there is no connection with that "struggle for the world" which both East and West conceived it to be from 1917 to the mid-nineteen-eighties. The Soviet experiment is ending as the victim not of Bolshevism's enemies but of the movement's own contradictions.

It was supposed to work the other way. It was the capitalist West whose "inner contradictions" were supposed to condemn it. But a lot of things were supposed by the messianic, prophetic, internally consistent intellectual propositions of Marxism-Leninism—and by those who opposed it but in doing so accepted its intellectual categories. Ignazio Silone, the Italian novelist, who moved from the Bolshevik revolutionary's position to that of the Christian revolutionary, wrote in the nineteen-forties that history's final battle would be between the Communists and the ex-Communists. No one else could meet the measure of this quasi-theological struggle. In Western eyes, it seemed something like Paradise Seized/Paradise Lost—Stalin a Mephistophelian figure, the Soviet people at war a heroic host betrayed. The audacity of the terror, the blatant lies, the deliberate defiance of "bourgeois" morality, the global ambition, and the utopian promise gave the whole thing Miltonian dimensions—made it a challenge to not only the historical but the moral order of mankind, a thrilling challenge to those in the West who took up the Cold War.

The Revolution's enemies considered the Leninist-Stalinist "totalitarian" state a political mutation—possibly the terminal one. George Orwell's "1984" presented a fictionalized Soviet Union of the (near) future which combined oppressive power with perpetual war and perpetual sterility, which existed for war, manipulated truth, redefined language, rewrote history, banished beauty and love, reduced men and women to neutered drones—and succeeded. Yet all this time the Soviet Union was failing—failing to feed itself, failing to keep up with the non-military industrial and social progress even of the Eastern European countries it controlled. It was on a track leading to the crisis that was admitted, with exemplary honesty, at this summer's special Party Conference.

TO say, though, that this episode in modern history is now all but over leaves one with the enormous and almost entirely unconsidered problem of what follows. Until very recently, it was thought exotic or fanciful to suggest that the really serious problem the world confronts between now and the end of the century is how the Soviet Union is to be released from this hopeless ideological engagement that weighs upon its internal affairs and its economy, and also from its ultimately unsustainable politico-military overlordship in Eastern and East Central Europe. Gorbachev is rocking the Soviet Union loose from the anchorage it has possessed for seventy years. Its problem now is that it has no usable past—no model in its history for an alternative, constitutional, representative political and social order. Self-sufficient in its past sense of its civilization as the "Third Rome"—after Rome itself and Constantinople—Russia had possessed a religious notion of mission to the world to which Lenin gave a secular reformulation. Nikolay Berdyayev, the religious philosopher and one-time Marxist, wrote in the nineteen-thirties, "The Russian people have not realized their messianic idea of Moscow, the Third Rome. . . . In [the Petersburg Empire] a final cleavage took place. The messianic idea of the Russian people assumed either an apocalyptic form or a revolutionary." The revolutionary option now has been explored and exhausted. Russians, though, are most unlikely to look abroad for a new lead. This is the reason the Soviet leaders cling so desperately to Leninism—to the "true" Leninism, the "real" Leninism—as the starting point for reconstructing a place to stand. Yet even in Moscow people are beginning openly to concede that Lenin began the practices of ter-

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ror, forced labor, and concentration camps which Stalin later expanded; that the "personality cult" began with him; and that Lenin perpetuated a Russian authoritarianism that antedated Bolshevism.

It can be argued that czarist society was evolving toward a Western European standard of constitutional monarchy when the First World War struck everything down, and that the Bolshevik Revolution was actually a political trauma, reactionary and obscurantist in effect, halting a constructive political development. If one takes the language of Gorbachev and his fellow-reformers to mean what it means in the West —"pluralism," "democracy"—they could be said to be attempting, by indirection, to re-start that evolution. But neither in Leninism nor in czarism is there the liberal or constitutional political precedent that the Soviet Union needs—one to which people might refer in attempting to find a new course.

Reform in Russia has in the past consistently failed, or proven inconclusive. The "Westernizers" were always defeated. Gorbachev stands in the line of Westernizing intellectuals and reformist czars; but none of those before him could secure for Russia the open, non-arbitrary, "legal," "democratic" government that Gorbachev says he wants. That they failed does not mean that he has to fail, but the size of the problem must not be underestimated. There is simply no precedent in Russia's history for what has now been undertaken. The change he and his associates propose is compelled to justify itself by reference to an ideological system that has failed in practice and is intellectually discredited. To break with that system would leave Gorbachev and the reformers without a place to stand, a fulcrum from which to move society, a justification for their own power. They rule Russia by virtue of the Party, Leninism, Marxism. Yet the Party, Leninism, and Marxism are the problem. It is an amazing situation. The Leninist adventure is over. What has begun? —WILLIAM PFAFF

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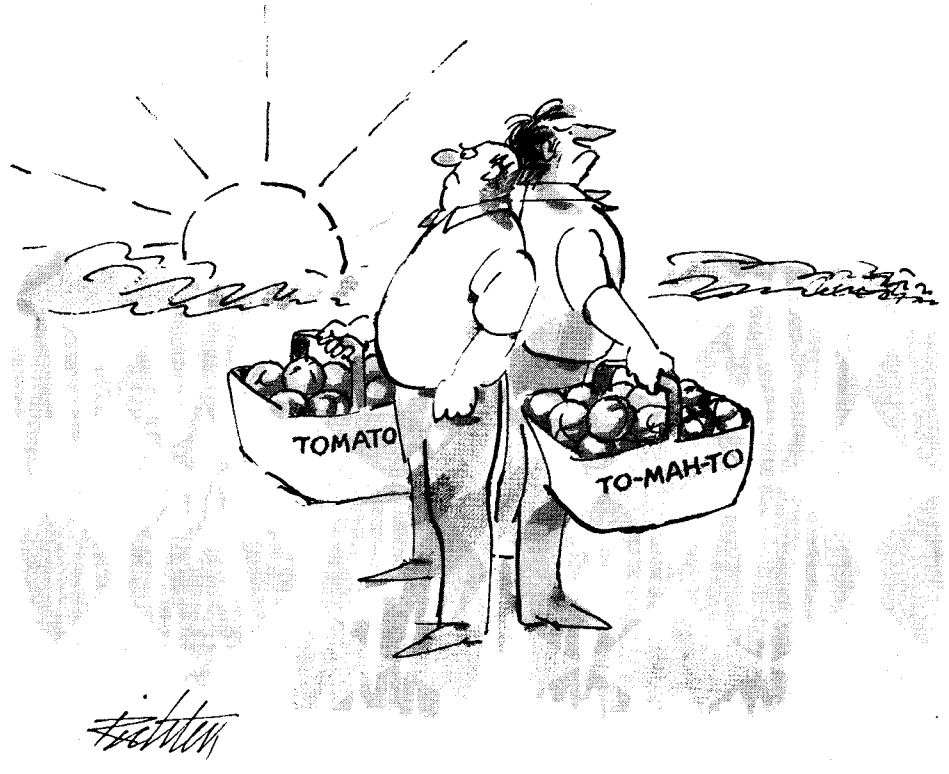
BOOKS

She-Devil

FAY WELDON'S "The Hearts and Lives of Men" (Viking; $18.95) is a long, impossibly intricate bedtime story. It hops from climax to climax, from dire perils to implausible escapes and back again, with an almost unnerving ease; it gets us all anxious and excited, then reassures us with a bit of homey wisdom; it manages, somehow, to be both manic and soothing. Weldon, an English novelist, whose most famous book is her 1983 housewife's-revenge fantasy "The Life and Loves of a She-Devil," has the reputation of being a feminist scourge, but at heart all she is is a mother: a *real* mother. Her tone is always "I know lots of things you don't, and if you're very, very good I'll tell you some of them." And she'll never let us, her readers and children, become too comfortable; she'll be damned if she'll allow herself to be taken for granted. She creates havoc while remaining infuriatingly calm. In the first half of "The Hearts and Lives of Men" quite a lot happens, and at an absurdly speedy pace: Clifford Wexford and Helen Lally meet at a party and fall in love and into bed the same night, and Helen becomes pregnant; Helen is persuaded by the evil, jealous Angie to have an abortion, but Clifford sweeps into the clinic at the last moment and snatches her away from the doctor; they marry, and a daughter, Nell, is born on Christmas Day, 1965; ten months later, on Guy Fawkes Day, Helen, made jealous (with reason) by scheming Angie, gets even by sleeping with a neighbor's husband; she and Clifford divorce, and Clifford gets custody, care, and control of the baby; the decision is reversed, giving Helen care and control; she marries a dull journalist named Simon; Clifford, deranged, hires a nicotine-addicted crook named Blotton to kidnap Nell; the plane taking Blotton and Nell to Switzerland, where Clifford now lives, breaks apart in midair, but the tail section (the smoking section) plops intact into the English Channel, off the coast of France, and the kidnapper and the child survive; Nell, presumed dead and remembering almost nothing of her brief life in England, is cared for by the Marquis and Milady de Troite, who live in a château and practice diabolical arts; Clifford has affairs; Helen doesn't love Simon, and Simon has an affair; the insurance company probes the crash, and the investigator falls in love with Helen, who doesn't reciprocate; two years later, the château burns to the ground during a Black Mass, but Nell is rescued by a servant, Marthe; fleeing the château, Marthe is killed in an automobile accident; Nell is not; the insurance investigator, spurred on by Helen, who believes that Nell is still alive, arrives at the château a few weeks later, by which time Nell's in an orphanage and the trail is cold. After all that, Weldon addresses her audience this way: "Reader, do you hate surprises? I do. I like to know what's coming next." She's got her nerve.



It's wise to be careful when this writer starts buddying up to us with her "Dear Reader" routine. In a previous novel, the anti-military farce "The Shrapnel Academy," Weldon brings her tale to a particularly outrageous conclusion and then, in her best fake-ingenuous manner, writes, "Reader, I know you do not like this ending to the story. . . . I wish there was some other possible ending, but there isn't." Somehow, this doesn't make us feel a lot better; if anything, we feel vaguely guilty for having ever questioned her wisdom. Weldon's narratives require us to make huge leaps of faith, and then to keep making them: it's as if she wanted to see how far she can push us before we rebel. It isn't simply a matter of getting us to accept the intrusion of fairy-tale figures and elements of the fantastic—she-devils, witches (in "Puffball"), revenants (in "Remember Me")—into the otherwise solidly domestic, English-bourgeois-novel universe of her fiction. What's unnerving about Weldon is that she seems to *identify* with her vengeful, manipulative supernatural agents. They exercise their powers capriciously, act upon the other characters with a ruthlessness that makes us very uncomfortable—in part because their actions so precisely reflect what we fear is the author's attitude toward her readers.

Weldon uses her storytelling powers wantonly, brazenly. Typically, she establishes a lofty, formal perspective on her characters at the outset, inviting us to feel superior to them, inveigling us into a kind of complicity with her pitiless, sardonic tone. (She knows how eager we are to condemn the way other people live their lives.) But then, al-

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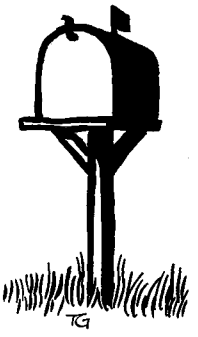
most before we're aware of it, the imperious nastiness stops seeming quite so gleeful—as if it had been somehow devalued by our eager acceptance of it—and we begin to suspect that the author's teasing malice is being directed at us. Suddenly, she's trying to "understand" the characters she has been so mean to, pulling back from her wicked caricatures of their failings, encouraging us to take a more benign view, as in this passage from "Hearts and Lives": "Middle-aged men fall for young women without the dark powers having to be involved, God knows, so let's just say Mr. Kildare was a dirty old man. But I don't know—say that of Brenda's father? It seems unkind." While she's making these (deliberately) rather feeble-sounding disclaimers, the mechanisms that will seal her characters' fates are gathering momentum. Just as we've begun to feel the tiniest bit sorry for the sleazy husband Bobbo and the vapid "other woman" Mary Fisher in "She-Devil," the vengeful schemes of Bobbo's abandoned wife, Ruth, kick in: Bobbo, an accountant, goes to prison for embezzling his clients' funds (Ruth has not only committed the crime and framed him for it but also influenced the judge to give him the stiffest possible sentence); Mary Fisher, a romance novelist, suffers a decline in her creative powers (and her sales), and then gets cancer. Having detailed, lovingly, all the disguises and cunning plots Ruth has devised to help Fate along, having allowed us to delight in this elaborate engine of revenge, Weldon asks us to confront the consequences of our pleasure: Still enjoying yourselves? We may suspect that there's an element of sadism in this.



Or does that seem unkind? In fact, there's something of the oppressor in all storytellers: they mean to grip, to enthrall—to compel us to submit to their vision of the world. Weldon's just a little more up front about it than most. She's such a *cheerful* manipulator, flaunting her omniscience and her omnipotence so shamelessly that they turn into jokes: even she can't quite believe how much power we're willing to grant her in our pursuit of entertainment. She recently told an interviewer, "I put forward occasionally the most outrageous propositions, which I would expect people to disagree with. I'm surprised when they don't." (We know how she hates surprises.) In "The Hearts and Lives of Men" Weldon bombards the reader with propositions of all sorts: comments on the characters and the action, sweeping moral and philosophical statements, chatty asides about this or that aspect of everyday life, ingenious justifications for the most bizarre coincidences. She seems at times to be saying whatever comes into her head, just because she *can*, because she's the author and no one's going to stop her: "Reader, if only he [Clifford] hadn't been so greedy; if only gold and money hadn't so appealed; if only Cynthia had loved him better and filled up the bucket of his need—if only! What use are 'if only's.' Still, they're interesting." There's so much "voice" in this novel that we can't help laughing: we know that Weldon's trying to put one (well, many) over on us, she knows that we know, she's improvising desperately in the attempt to charm us out of our disbelief, and it's all tremendous fun, of a very weird sort. Narrating this tall tale with nothing but her dry irony as protection against our skepticism, she bobs and weaves, testing our responses, anticipating objections, trying out little feints and evasions, dazzling us with verbal moves so we won't see the whoppers coming until they're practically on top of us. It's mock aggression, though—just sparring, an exercise designed to sharpen our wits and keep us alert, and no more genuinely threatening than the actions of an animal mother cuffing her cubs to prepare them for the rigors of the wild. The world Weldon creates in "The Hearts and Lives of Men" is absurdly dangerous and yet—for those who are resourceful, vigilant, or plain lucky—not necessarily crushing. And the persona she has created for herself here is the perfect voice of that world, its ideal play-by-play announcer: treacherous, egotistical, but somehow fundamentally benign.

This time around, anyway. Weldon makes it very clear that the fate of her characters depends entirely on her caprice, and not at all on our expectations or desires. In "Hearts and Lives,"

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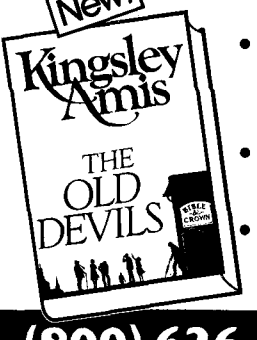

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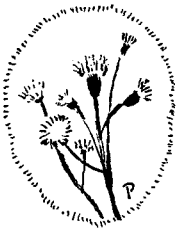
which was written in installments for a British women's magazine, she tells the reader immediately that the story will have a happy ending—before, obviously, she can have had the slightest idea of how she was going to bring such an ending about. Her bubbly announcement ("But it's Christmastime. Why not?") emphasizes the arbitrariness of her choice, and therefore drastically reduces the possibility of our finding comfort in the happy outcome. Making things turn out well isn't any kind of philosophical statement, an affirmation of faith in the world's benevolence; it's just something a storyteller can do, if she feels like it. In the course of a twenty-year career that now includes twelve novels, a handful of plays, a good deal of writing for television (most notably the first episode of "Upstairs, Downstairs"), and the usual English quota of literary journalism, Weldon seems to have discovered that she can make her prose do almost anything she wants it to. Since the mid-seventies, her work has grown steadily more confident, her narrative effects have become bolder and more varied, and "The Hearts and Lives of Men" is her most uninhibited performance yet. Writing in installments, making everything up as you go along, isn't for novelists with faint hearts, and Weldon, far from showing any nervousness about exposing her powers of invention in this way, clearly relishes the chance to let her imagination run wild. She writes as if she were Fate itself.



There's every indication, though, that Weldon is as skeptical about Fate—whether its author is God, the Devil, nature, or a novelist—as she is about everything else. She ends her novel "The President's Child," a political fairy tale narrated by a blind housewife, with these bitter sentences: "God laughs at me, buffeting me around His universe. It is His peculiar pleasure." In the creepy, gothic "Words of Advice," the storyteller figure is a cripple named Gemma, who pours a compelling (and, as it turns out, false) tale of her own woe into the innocent ears of her young house guest Elsa for the sole purpose of enslaving her. Introducing her tale, preparing her victim for imprisonment in a fictional world, this seductive narrator appeals to the child in Elsa: "I have a story to tell. It's a fairy tale. I love fairy tales, don't you? . . . Have you never noticed the way the secret world sends out signs and symbols into the ordinary world? It delivers our messages in the form of coincidences: letters crossing in the post, unfamiliar tunes heard three times in one day, the way that blows of fate descend upon the same bowed shoulders, and beams of good fortune glow perpetually upon the blessed. Fairy tales . . . are lived out daily. There is far more going on in the world than we ever imagine." The world Gemma describes is, of course, also the world of traditional English fiction, the plotty, dramatic, had-he-but-known novels of the nineteenth century—the kind of fiction Weldon herself pointedly evokes in "The Hearts and Lives of Men." And it's worth remembering that Ruth, the domestic avenger of "She-Devil," is also a maker of fictions, a meticulous plotter, arranging reality so that the story of her life will have the symmetry of perfect justice: in the end, she undergoes extensive and painful surgery to turn herself into the image of the "other woman," the romance novelist Mary Fisher, and resumes her life with Bobbo (recently released) as if nothing had ever happened—as if she had simply torn up her life and revised it, changing "Mary Fisher" to "I" in every sentence. The fiction whose author is Ruth may be more "just" in some absolute sense than the fiction devised by Bobbo and his romance novelist ("Love was real, and life was everlasting, and endings were happy. Were they not themselves the living proof that romance was real?"), but it's no less willed and artificial: it, too, requires victims.

What Fay Weldon seems to have found out in the process of mastering the art of the English novel is that storytelling is power—a kind of power that she might be all too willing to be corrupted by, and that her readers are far too eager to submit to. When we open a novel, we become like children: we crave authority, a firm hand—and, in the face of all our baffling adult experience, actually expect order, resolution, justice. Of course Weldon's most manipulative characters are her most vivid and satisfying: they create what we love best, the plot, and without them there would be none of these enchanting stories. When, in the new novel, the author finally kills off the unspeakable Angie, who—along with Fate—has generated most of the colorful catastrophes that have rained down on Clifford and Helen and Nell, she gives her an oddly tender farewell: "We include in us Angie, and Mr. Blotton . . . We must learn to incorporate them, include them in our vision of ourselves. We must not hiss the villain, but welcome him in. . . . Angie, friend, rest in peace." As is often the case in Weldon, the studied plainness of the sentiment almost conceals the writer's cunning: there's far more going on here than we might imagine. This requiem for Angie is also a statement of the aims of Weldon's fiction: she includes the schemers, the storytellers, the clever arrangers of Fate in her vision of herself, and then lays them to rest. "The Hearts and Lives of Men" is a spectacular traditional entertainment, grabbing us right from the start, forcing us to hurtle forward at its insane pace wherever it chooses to take us, compelling us to surrender to its narrative will. But it's also a deeply funny subversion of the kind of story we were all brought up on: Weldon self-consciously presents herself as a sort of tyrant of fiction, an overbearing, cajoling parent, and makes us wonder why we take it. (Just wonder, that's all; she doesn't want us to leap from docile childhood to snarling, cynical adolescence overnight.) She says "Trust me" in such a way—too charmingly, too persistently, too elaborately—that we begin to feel that nothing and no one can ever be fully trusted. By laughing at us a little bit, she liberates us. That's her peculiar pleasure. —TERRENCE RAFFERTY

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HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPARTMENT

[*From the Clarksville (Tenn.) Leaf-Chronicle*]

The bridge attracts picture snappers from far away. They sometimes set up their tripods and study her design before they commit her countenance to cellulose.

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He's probably going to scratch his head quizzically and typically when he reads this, but I feel he has cultivated a belief which his father lived out before him. Also named Emery, his father was a produce man of the old school and he "knew" fruits and vegetables in the biblical sense.

—*Gourmet Retailer.*

Until word got around the old school.

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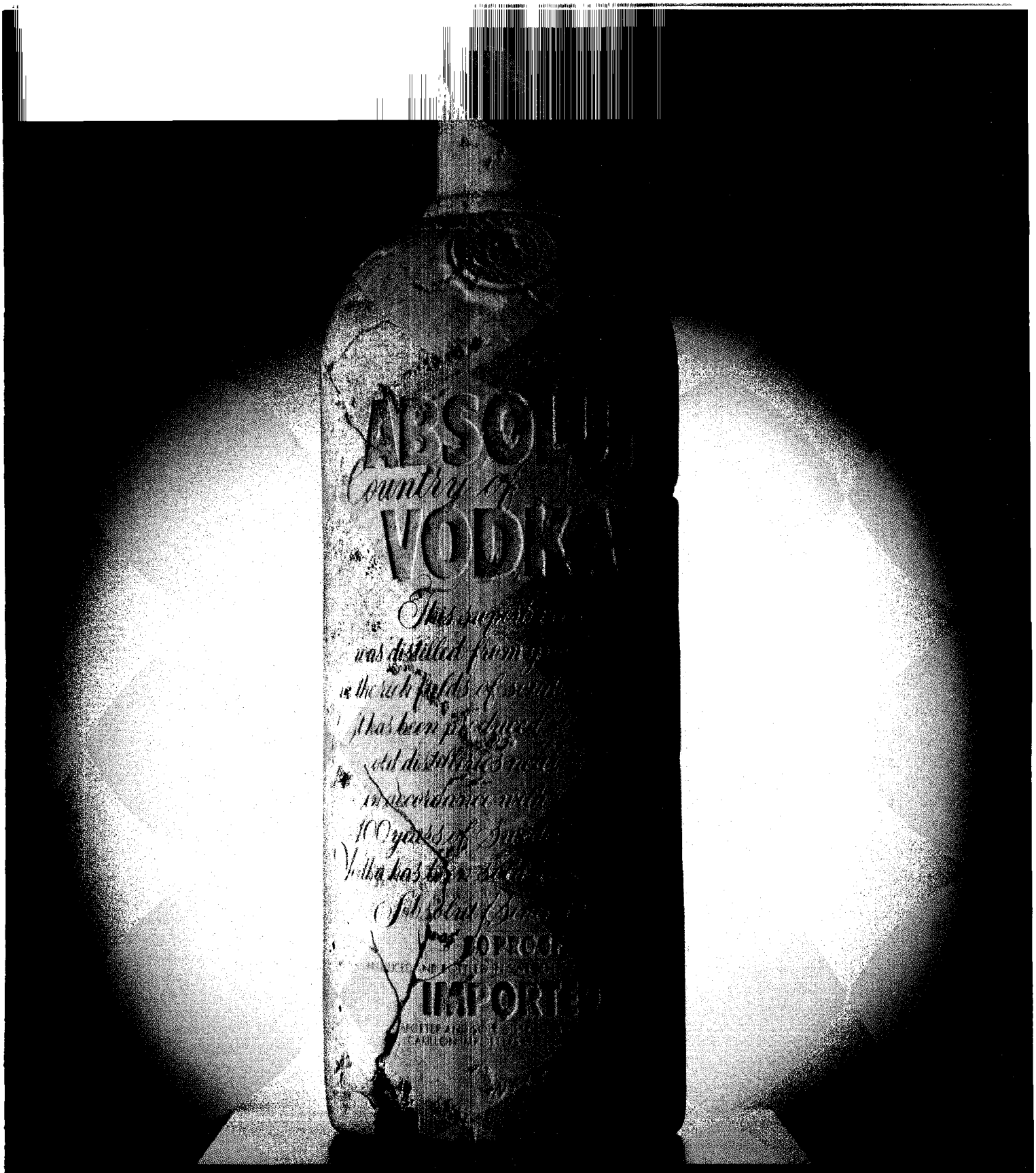

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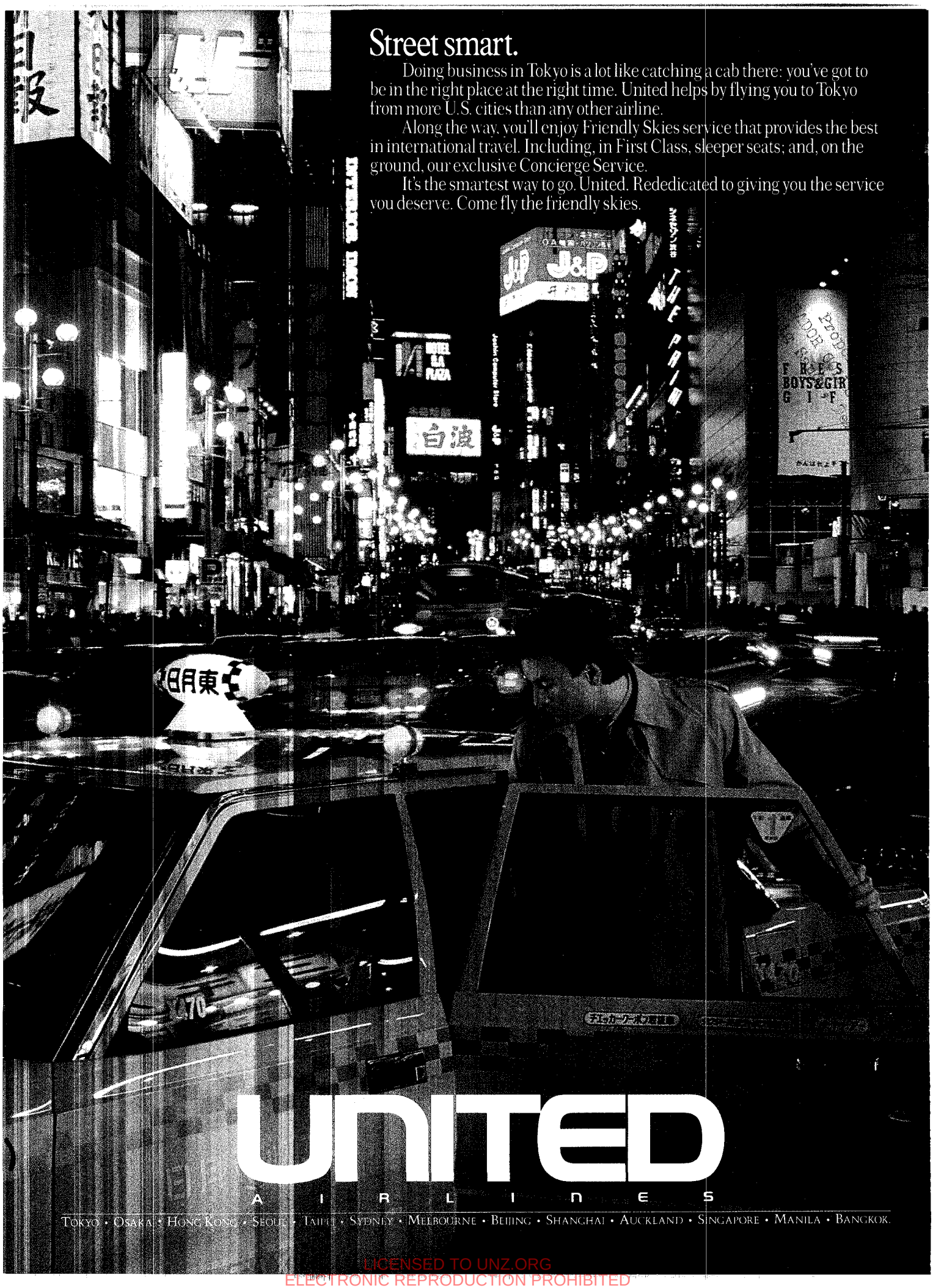

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